

"THE 17"



EDWIN C. WASHBURN

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TWENTY MINUTES FOR DINNER

“THE 17”

BY

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*The Railroad Question; John Read, American;
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DEDICATED
TO THE
ENGINES AND MEN
WHO
DEVELOPED THE WEST

PREFACE

HOW many of us today, while comfortably seated in our Pullmans, give more than a passing thought to the locomotive at the head of our train?

Perhaps in years gone by some old engines have related to understanding railroad workers the stories of their lives, of their ambitions and how they pioneered the way over the vast undulating prairies and through the silent forests of the North country. Have they spoken of the service they rendered to those they established in this far off country and of the hardships that they underwent in doing their share?

It was natural that there was sympathy between the men of vision who did the work and the engines they loved and depended upon.

In drawing a picture of these early days when men were men and engines were engines it seemed desirable to incorporate in the story the happenings on other railroads. However, it can be stated that there is more truth than fiction in these memoirs of an old American eight wheeler.

This book is quite properly dedicated to the old time railroad men and their engines who went out to a great unknown empire in the early days, and in remembrance to those who have gone over the road for the last time to a terminal where their spirits may meet and recall a past that has departed for all time.

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CHAPTER I

BACK IN PHILADELPHIA

MANY years ago when the flaming forges cast their red glow into the dark and shadowed places of small and low roofed buildings of the blacksmith shops, great steam hammers of those days forged from rough iron and steel the parts that were to go to the slow planers, lathes and drills that cut their whining way through the steel and iron, that the old Baldwin Locomotive works out on Broad Street, Philadelphia, might serve the republic, by the building of the locomotives that were to vitalize the vast empire out west and north of Lake Michigan.

Out in the erecting shops, locomotives that were and those that were to be stood waiting on their tracks for the master hand that was to complete its work. There must be a time when the spirit enters and an engine first feels the thrill of life. Is it when the final plates are riveted into the boiler, the time when the shell is lowered onto its wheels and it first feels the solid rails, or is it when the boiling water sends its pulsing steam to the waiting cylinders?

This question may be more difficult to answer than to state that on one early summer afternoon as the dimming light penetrated the dull glass of the small paned shop windows, two engines were talking as engines have a way of doing.

The largest and the one furthest along was a passenger engine being built for fast running on a large eastern road. She perhaps, like many designed for such service, had that superior feeling that some deem most desirable in a locomotive that is to haul passenger trains. For self-confidence in an engine has a tendency to affect those the operators of the road wish to impress, namely the travelling public.

The smaller engine of the two was a low, sturdy looking

machine with small wheels, and around the shops it was reported she was one of a number that were being built for a new northwestern road. Her boiler had just been lowered on her wheels, so she was hardly far enough along to argue and discuss her own and the merits of the great beautiful engine that stood on the next track. Being youthful she hardly appreciated the fact that passenger engines are likely to be temperamental and fond of talking about themselves.

The debutante, or the engine that was to enter high society was saying,

"While, of course, you've not the fine figure and lines I have, nor my high spidery driving wheels and large powerful cylinders, I will say that you are becoming more attractive looking every day of your life, and unless they destroy your advancing beauty with a great wood-burner stack, you may be a credit to our great Baldwin family.

"It is possible, my little friend, that you have heard some of our men and those visiting us, when referring to me, call attention to the personality of 'that locomotive,' and you may have also heard more than one say 'Isn't she a beauty? She'll soon be flying over her road with the Limited, the wonder train of the world,' while you, little sister"—the debutante was interrupted by a torn voice coming through the hole that was soon to be covered by the stack.

"Yes, me," mumbled the voice. "What about me? Have you heard anyone say anything about me?"

"No, not much; for when they come out here to look us over, they spend most of their time talking about me. Some say I've a wonderful fire box and what I'm going to save in the way of coal will be something to talk about."

"But what about me—what do they say?" asked the small westerner.

"Nothing much, but that you're going to be a sturdy little affair, and that you had better be."

"And what do you suppose they mean by that?"

"Hard to tell, little one. While I'm pretty young myself, I've heard big engines say to their friends that they were glad that they were not in the place of that engine over there, for she's sure got a hard life in front of her."

"How do they know I've got a hard life in front of me? I haven't even got a name yet," demanded the westerner.

"I don't know, but if I were saying, I'd say so too."

A forlorn voice answered, "Why do you say that?"

"Well, from what I've heard, squatty engines like you with small wheels generally go to the southern and western roads where the tracks are so rough engines built like me couldn't stay on the rails. But why worry about your future? Be patient and we can tell more about your future when they bring in your stack. And talking about stacks, anyone with half an eye can tell from mine with its brass top that I'm real quality; and I'd call your attention to all my fine polished brass and the way they have painted and varnished me. No, it won't be long now before the travelling public and those on the roads will stop and feast their eyes on me while they say 'gracious me, but isn't that a beautiful engine.'"

This one-sided conversation was interrupted when their superintendent and a stranger came to a halt between the two engines. While it was quite evident the distinguished looking man had come to see the small engine, his attention was involuntarily drawn to the thoroughbred. They heard their superintendent say,

"General, I hope that sometime we can build such engines for you. We regard her as about the finest thing we've ever turned out. Looks like a race horse, doesn't she?"

"I've never seen anything to approach her. From her drivers, I'd say she's intended to travel."

"You're right," answered the Baldwin man, "we built her to run a very fast train on one of our Eastern roads, and we all feel assured that she's going to show a pretty clean pair of heels. Some day you may want some like her."

The man he called General answered, "Perhaps so; let's hope we may. But it will not be for some time."

Turning about he inquired, "Is this one of ours, Mr. Superintendent, and when are we to get the rest of the twenty-five we ordered? We need them badly, for our track is getting pretty well across upper Michigan."

"It won't be long, General, for the work is well in hand. Well, what do you think of her?"

"While they're not as large as your pride over there, I have been a trifle worried that they might be too heavy for our new track, which is still pretty rough in spots."

"You need not worry, General; you've got a sixty pound rail and we figured close on the weight of your engines. If they had larger drivers, they might roll around pretty lively on a rough track, but built close to the ground as they are, I don't believe you'll have any trouble. You wouldn't like to increase your order to thirty-five, would you? As we need a little more business, we might shade the price a trifle."

"Yes, I'd like to, but engines at sixty-five hundred dollars each run into big money. No, I'm sorry to say we can hardly see our way clear to get more, much as we would like another ten."

"Perhaps later, General."

"Yes, when we get around to it. But when shall I tell our people to expect the rest of our order?"

The superintendent, passing his experienced eye over the engine, remarked, "She's well along." Beckoning a man over, he said, "Jim, when can I promise these engines? For the road needs power."

"Oh, maybe by the fifth of next month."

"Not before that?" asked the General.

The superintendent turned to his man. "You can do better than that, can't you Jim, if you push the work harder?"

"Maybe I can. Yes, guess I can get this one out by the first of the month."

"How about the rest, Jim?"

"They'll come fast now that we've finished that rush Eastern order. I'd say by the last of the following month."

"Will that be satisfactory, General?" asked the Baldwin man.

"Entirely so," he replied, as both railroad and shop officials walked off.

It was not long before the prideful voice was again heard. "Well, little one, did you hear what they said about me? Called me a thoroughbred, the best they ever built, and said that I'd show a clean pair of heels—what they were meaning by that I don't know, but it certainly was something fine. Gracious, I'm glad that I'm a Baldwin, for I heard an engine that was being overhauled say to another old timer that there was nothing to compare with a good boiler. If you've got that, you've not much to worry about. The one she was talking to responded, 'Yes, it's a pleasure to steam well, but you can't unless your flues are clean. When I started out, mine were in fine shape but later when I needed new ones, our purchasing agent got a bargain lot of flues, and the time I had with them; always leaking, and if there is anything worse than a leaky flue squirting water on your fire, I don't know what it is.'

"'I do,' answered the other, 'it's when they are so choked up that you can't get a whiff of heat through them. I remember one day when we were trying to make up time on a fast passenger train——'

"She was interrupted.

"'You needn't tell me; I know all about it. There was that night when I was running extra that——'

"She in turn was stopped. 'What's the use in telling me of how you were abused and how they kept you wearing your heart out trying to do your work before they put you in the shop.' Then they spoke of the way their nerves were affected when men were hammering around their insides.

"And Squatty, they kept it up 'way into the night. Do you suppose we will get as tiresome when we get old and do nothing but talk of our insides and our ailments?"

The small engine responded. "We are likely to, but I question if it would be more tiring than to listen to a beautiful locomotive talk about herself."

"You're not, by any chance, meaning me?"

"Maybe I am. Now I'd rather think about myself and that rough road up in Michigan."

"I wouldn't if I were you, Shorty; for you'll have plenty of time to think on cold nights when it's 'way down below zero. I can see you now 'way off in the woods, on a siding, the snow drifting around and the wind howling through the trees, while you're waiting for a late train to pass.

"Like as not your flues will be leaking something dreadful and your wet wood hardly burning, so when the time comes to move on, you won't be able to get up steam, and you'll be cussed from the train dispatcher down. Yes, you're going to have plenty of time to think."

"How do you know so much about it, you proud thing that has never turned a wheel? Maybe while I'm bothered with wet wood, you'll be getting clinkers in your grates and can't make steam yourself; you won't brag so much then about your brass and what you can do. Yes, and I can see you, standing off on a siding messing black smoke over everything, while those that were responsible for you are trying to blame bad coal for your falling down on your work. Besides, I'm seeing nice, long freight trains go around you, asking what's the matter with that nice, pretty new engine with a brass ribbon around her stack."

While the two new engines were still abusing each other, a heavy mogul called out, "Stop your scrapping, children, and let the rest of us go to sleep."

CHAPTER II

FINISHED

ONE noon a few days later Squatty the switch engine came poking around. Idle for a few minutes, she began to gossip and tell the kind of stories that switch engines pick up in the yards. As the unfinished engines did not seem to relish her yarns, she changed the subject and began:

"Well, little one, you may be interested to know that your swell friend is making a record for herself. They started her on freight to break her in. Of course, no one expected her to do much with her big wheels, yet they say she steamed well and handled herself all right; in fact, a through passenger engine told me she did so well that they made a test run with her yesterday. They gave her a full weight passenger train and she whipped it over the road, making at times over seventy miles an hour. Some of the old timers are worried about it. I heard the 1012 say to the 1151 that of course she made time with a good track and picked coal. 'But just wait, 1151, until she gets a slippery rail and the kind of stuff they give us to burn and you may hear a different story.'

"'You're right,' responded the other engine, 'she won't find it so funny when she gets a string of baggage, mail express, coaches and sleepers behind her; then she may wish for smaller wheels and fewer brass trimmings.' Yet," continued the little switcher, "I think myself, that she's all right and may get along."

The new westerner replied in a bashful way, "While I've never been out on the road, I believe from what one of the twelve hundreds told me that it might be better to run along at a good steady gait and be on time, than to go flying down

the grades at a dangerous breakneck speed to make up the time lost in dragging up the hills."

"There's more truth than fiction in what she said," replied the switcher. "I never took any great stock in engines or men either, that had to have an easy straight track to show what they could do. I've been here a long time and I know it's not the fancy, painted engines with the trimmings that bring in the most money. Yes, just cast your headlight——"

"But I haven't got one yet."

"No, so you haven't, but if you had, I'd suggest you take a squint at that dirty old mogul over there. She's not much to look at, but when she gets down to work, she's an earner all right. While few pay any attention to her and no one stops to watch her go sliding by, the way they will with your fancy friend, our folks running things up in the office know the mogul, and expect her to come dragging in on time, and not bragging about what she's done, either."

"Why do they call her a mogul?" asked the new engine.

"I don't know, except that's her name. I heard a man with glasses once say that a mogul was some sort of a boss over in Turkey or some place. So maybe perhaps when they wanted a name, they selected that, for these mogul engines certainly do boss their trains."

"Yet they can't run very fast, can they?" asked the westerner.

"Not very, little one, with their pony trucks."

"And what's a pony truck? I've never heard of one before."

"No, don't suppose you have. When they stick a single pair of wheels under the front end so they can swivel about, they call that a pony truck. And, a mogul told me herself—that if she got to going too fast her pony might hop the track, and make an awful mess of things." The switcher hesitated. "I don't know as I should repeat it, but I heard the head man here say that he thought the coming engine for both freight and passenger would be ten wheelers."

"And what's a ten wheeler, Miss Switcher?" asked the beginner.

"Oh, she's an engine with a full truck and six drivers and so you won't have to ask, I'll say a full truck is one with four wheels, not altogether unlike the trucks used on freight cars."

"Then, Miss Switcher, why can't a ten wheeler run just as fast as she wants to? From what you've said before, I'd think with big or small drivers, she'd be fine for any kind of service."

The switcher answered, as her engineer climbed into her cab, "You're right, little one, and I'll say that you have sense. Yes, and I like your looks better every day. Too bad they are going to put a balloon stack on you to spoil your appearance; yet from your extended boiler or front end, I'd say that some day you're going to have a straight one. But as you'll burn wood at first, they can't have you scattering sparks all over the country. Well bye-bye, for I may not see you again, as I hear they are planning to give me a general overhauling. One thing more, little one. Always remember that you are a Baldwin. Don't brag about it too much, for some other makes of engines are rather jealous of us Baldwins. You do your work and don't go worrying yourself to death at the start that you're not all right, for you are. And don't ever forget when you're out West that you belong to our big family, and that we all expect you to be a credit to us, and fit to bear our name plate." As she sniffled off as if with a bad cold in her cylinders, she called back, "Well, so long little lady, and good luck to you."

The 17, for that was the number they had now painted on her sand box, was coming along in good shape, and her sister the 18 was being set up on the next track, where the boilers and other parts were being brought in for the 19 and 20. It was certainly interesting to watch them build her sisters, and so get a first-hand knowledge as to how she was put together herself.

When the other engines were set on their wheels and began to think, they all asked the older 17 if she knew what kind of engines they were going to be, and if she had by chance heard where they were going.

The 17, hesitating a moment, spoke in the knowing way that some beginners have a way of doing, and informed them

that they were being built for a new northwestern road and that she was soon leaving. Then they requested in subdued voices that she observe and study her work. For it would help them when they reached the road if there were some one there to explain their duties and tell them of the things they should and should not do.

The 20, however, who seemed different from the rest, spoke up in an unfinished way: "Guess the 17 will have enough trouble minding her own wheels without thinking of us."

There was something about the 20, from the time she was set on her wheels, that the rest of them disliked, for she had begun to boast and bluster from the time she could even whisper. From the first, she assured them that she was going to be the best of the family, and was most positive that she'd be running passenger trains while they were pulling freights. Hadn't the 17 already noticed how much more time they were spending on her than they were on the others? When a great balloon stack was brought in and loaded on the 17's tender with her cowcatcher and headlight, the 20 sniffed.

"I'm glad they are not going to give me a horrid looking stack like that. 'Course it's just what you freighters need, but it's not the kind for the likes of me."

When they pulled the 17 out of the shop, she bade a kindly farewell to all except the conceited sister 20. Yet she did say, so she might hear, "While I'm not very old, I've lived long enough to know that those who expect the easiest things in life are the ones who are likely to have the hardest times." Later, when in a west-bound freight train, she summoned her courage and spoke to the big dignified freight engine on her train.

"While I've not been introduced to you 2010, I'd certainly appreciate it if you ever get time——"

The big engine mumbled back in a gruff tone, "What is it, little sister, that you'd like to have me do?"

"Not a great deal, but if you happen to have my sister, the 20, in your train on her way west, won't you speak to her, for she feels most superior, and seems to think that she's better

than the rest of us; and I fear unless some older engine speaks to her before she gets out on our road, she's going to make things very disagreeable for us all. And we shall have to live with her for a long time."

The roadster responded, "Of course I will, 17, but I'm afraid it will do little good. I've hauled a great many new engines in my time, and I know that there are engines like what you say your 20 is."

"And what's that, 2010?"

Being good humored as most big engines are, she replied, "Well, 17, you'll discover as we old folks have, that there are generally a few engines in every order that hold the same opinions you say your sister does. The peculiar thing about it is that while they are the exact counterparts of those who handle themselves properly these conceited sisters are always falling down on their jobs. For instance, take our 2025; she's exactly like the rest of us, but for a contrary, mean, disagreeable engine—but why continue; for it would not be good taste for me to criticize a member of my own family."

"Is it the same with engines built by other companies?" asked the new member of the family.

"Exactly that way, 17, and I imagine that there are members of every family that the others do not altogether approve of. Peculiar, isn't it, that while some of us do our work well, others are always getting off the track, do not steam well, and are continually late? Yes, and they always give the most plausible reasons for their shortcomings. Don't you ever be one of that kind, 17. Do your work, and remember that if you do not have the spirit, no amount of overhauling will make you the engine you were designed and built to be. Do your best; that's all anyone can do; and do not get discouraged. If you have some hard engineers, forget them, for you'll have good ones that you will become as fond of as they will of you. Now I must get up ahead."

CHAPTER III

FROM THE PAST

SOME time during the night the 17 was awakened by a muffled voice. "I wish someone would speak to the road-master about this awful yard. It's as much as your life is worth to run over some of these switches." A voice answered, "I'll say so, too. Just yesterday I thought when I first put a wheel on one that it was going to ditch me. And I don't know now why I didn't break an equalizing spring."

"Same here," answered the first voice. "'Course, most of the bad spots are off where no one sees them. Yet they cuss us something dreadful if we get even a wheel off the track."

Having expressed their views on local conditions the first engine remarked:

"Wish it were lighter so I could get a better look at that new Baldwin that has just come in. She isn't at all bad looking for her size. I never heard of her road before. Do you know where it runs, 2036?"

The westerner, from her freight train, listened with interest as the other engine answered:

"From her name, I'd say she must run from that flour town out in Minnesota, for I can see Minneapolis on her tender. Maybe it's that new flour road that they are building east from Minneapolis. I heard a Northwestern boxcar telling an eastern car that she'd just come down with a load of lumber from a place up in Wisconsin, where they were working on a new road that was to take flour and grain east. She said an engine up there told her that it was going up through Canada; so it's likely that's where our little sister is bound. The eastern car, feeling superior, paid no attention, as if anything a car from west of Chicago had to say was hardly worth listening to."

The other engine responded. "Yes, that's the way with many eastern cars. I have wondered if they don't appreciate the fact that they'd get a good deal more fun out of life if they were not so formal. I have found that many of these western cars are the most interesting talkers. Once I heard a Northern Pacific car telling my tender how she'd been out on one of their first construction trains and how exciting it was when the Indians used to sit off on the hills and shoot them. Yes, and she said in a most casual way that she still carried a bullet in one of her side sills, that she got out on the Yellowstone division of that road. Just then we got to Martinsburg, and so I heard nothing more."

"Yes," responded the 2036, "it's always that way; I had the same experience the other day. That Mrs. Winans out at Cumberland, was telling of her life during the Civil War, when they had to send me out on an eastbound freight train. I think it's a shame that someone can't get hold of that old lady and write of her life."

The 17 had become so interested in the talk of the old engines that she forgot her youth, and asked; "Oh, won't you please tell me, 2046, who old Mrs. Winans is?"

The big engine, after throwing a look from her headlight, drawled: "Well, little one, a Winans is an engine built for the Baltimore and Ohio years and years ago. Keep your eyes open, and you may see one out in the mountains. Take a good look if you do, for she'll give you something to talk about when you get out West."

Then as the pair of big engines resumed their talk of local conditions, the westerner was glad when she was started west again. Being tired, she knew little as to what went on until early morning, when she was switched out of the train and set over beside a great round-house with a round cupola on its top. As she rested her wheels, several men appeared and went crawling about her to see that everything was all right. She heard one say:

"It's not much use inspecting these new engines, for we

always find them all right, but as them's the orders, suppose we've got to. Everything on your side all right, Mike?"

"Sure," was the answer.

All was then quiet until she heard whispering inside the old round-house. A waiting engine on the next track spoke down to her,

"Those old folks inside are busy relating again. Seems as if they were ready to talk their stacks off. Suppose we will, too, when we get as old as they are. Well, I'm off to work. You better listen, 17, for you'll find them quite interesting. Well, so long, little lady," as she rumbled off.

Inside a tired old voice was saying, "I'll never forget the day Stonewall Jackson came down the valley and seized a number of us——"

An old, yet younger voice broke in: "Who was this Stonewall Jackson you're speaking of?"

The 17 heard the irritated response: "If you'd listen instead of talking, you'd know more." Then, evidently speaking to an engine of her own age, "Is it not surprising how little these engines of the present time know about the history of our road, the country, and the many other things they should be posted about? When I was their age, I could tell the weight and steam pressure of any engine on the road. Now they are not concerned about anything but themselves."

"I'm not of the present generation," was snapped back. "I'm old too; that's why I'm stored here. But why can't you tell me who this Stonewall Jackson was, instead of ridiculing and abusing the generations that came after you and have a different appreciation of life?"

"Suppose I might as well," answered the old timer. "Jackson was probably the ablest general in the Civil War."

"Oh, I don't know about that," answered a more vigorous voice with a Western drawl. "How about General Grant?"

"'Course you don't know," answered the ancient one. "No one expects you to. It's a peculiar thing that you engines that were built in the East and worked out West are always bragging about your Generals and how they won the War."

"Didn't they?" was the retort.

"No, they didn't."

"But you folks East didn't do anything until Grant, with some of us, rolled in from the West. Then we finished up the War in a little over a year. We showed you folks how to run a war-time railroad. I'd say we did."

"You didn't do any such thing."

"All right, but what were you going to say, Granny, when you were interrupted?"

"I was informing this young lady that Jackson was the greatest general of the War, and how he came charging down here. As there had been a great scarcity of engines in the South, he seized a number of ours—indeed, he selected some of my own friends and dragged them over the country roads off down South."

Our 17 heard a giggle evidently from a younger stack, and the remark: "Granny, you're all right when you get story telling."

Granny retorted: "What I said is a matter of history, and you should know that a certain Captain Sharp of the Confederate Army hitched horses to my old companions and dragged them away. And from the condition they were in when returned, they evidently did not exaggerate when telling of what they had been through."

"If they had not been associates of yours," drawled the western voice, "I'd say they got just what was coming to them for trying to break up the Union. Even now those Winans friends of yours speak as if they were once Confederates themselves—but for northern built engines to allow themselves to be horsed about over the country roads, I'd say it was disgraceful."

"I was not mentioning the Winans," the dignified voice replied. "As to my Northern friends, I might retort that their opinions were not respected. They were seized against their will and forcibly removed; and in justice to them I might ask our distinguished friend from the Wheeling district what she might have done under like conditions."

"Done," was shouted back, "I'd have done plenty. I'd of busted their bridges first. Then if they'd got me on their roads, I'd of jumped the track every time I had the chance. If those disgraceful friends of yours had all shown the proper Union spirit, they could have so demoralized the Southern roads that perhaps it might not have been necessary for us and Grant to come East and help you folks out."

The ancient locomotive answered, "My young friend, you might be more tolerant if you had lived as long as some of us and had made the miles I have. You fail to appreciate the fact that an engine is under an obligation to serve, whether the duty is agreeable or not. If you have any desire for further comments, I might say——"

"Sure I have, Granny. I've nothing to do but listen, so go ahead."

"Then for your own good, I will continue, but before doing so I will say that I have found it necessary in the past to, at times, forget my personal feelings, and devote attention to some lacking agreeable personalities." Having made this acrid reply, she continued, "If my young friend again discredits my statement that these engines were forcibly removed, she had better interview some of our engines who were in active service when this same Captain Sharp returned to our road after the war in an official position."

"But what about the erring sisters, Grandmother. Were they like the States that went out?"

Ignoring this, the old engine continued: "My friends said they were in excellent condition when Sharp took them from Martinsburg, but after a few months on the poor, over-used roads, they developed many defects, for as you should know, the South was never keenly interested in industrial activities, and was thus poorly equipped to do the necessary repairs on our poor engines. And to me, it is an amazing thing that they were able to prolong the War the way they did. Indeed, they made a most remarkable record."

The gruff voice of the Wheeling district responded, "Any-

one listening to you, old lady, might assume you were a Southerner yourself, or had secession sentiments. First, you become overly enthusiastic over your General Jackson; then about the wonderful service these renegade friends of yours rendered the South. In fact, I cannot see why, on some dark night, you didn't sneak off of our line at Harper's Ferry and go off up the Shenandoah Valley to help your Southern friends. They certainly would have welcomed one having their interests so much at heart. It might have done you good too, to have been handled roughly, and to have come back to us with a makeshift cab with no glass, and in the disgraceful condition I'm told our stolen engines were in when they got back. Of course it's quite natural that some of our old timers who were built in Maryland should have had a sympathy for the South, but you, no, I cannot understand how a Northerner——"

"It is not necessary for you to understand, and I must say to my intolerant young friend that she should appreciate the fact that the War has now been over for nearly twenty years, and to those of us who have more mature understanding of history, it seems intolerable that this spirit of hatred should still exist." As there was no answer she continued:

"I further emphatically deny that I had any predilection towards the South and favored their attitude towards the dismemberment of the Union. I grieved that they took the deplorable measures that they did to right their supposed wrongs, and I lament to this day that there was so much dissension regarding their return to the Union. Being one of the earliest locomotives on the road, and in fact, of the whole country, I have probably a greater appreciation of the pre-Civil War situation than some of my young friends who have been built in recent years and never had dear associations with both the North and the South. To me, it is not in the least peculiar that the engines Mr. Winans built at Baltimore, in the almost Southern state of Maryland, should have had a sympathy for their old friends living down below the Potomac River. And you should further remember, my prejudiced friend from the West, that before West

Virginia cut away from the old Dominion State, that the Baltimore and Ohio was largely a Virginia railroad. So why is it so amazing and disgraceful that some of our engines, who had many personal friends and associations in the South continued their love for those they had so long served? And why should they be overly condemned for perhaps being a trifle glad when some of their misguided friends temporarily seized our road? Who can blame them when they again felt an old, understanding, and well-known hand at their throttles?"

The Wheeling engine, unable to contain herself longer, growled back:

"Yes, and I suppose you were proud when they burnt the Harper's Ferry bridge. Nice thing to do, I'll say it was—to go cutting our West off from the East."

Granny snapped, "Yes, and I wish they'd kept you cut off. It's no use trying to tell you young whippersnappers anything."

Now a very old broken voice chimed in: "Why can't you young engines stop quarreling for a while? We never fought so when I was a girl, and I'm inclined to think it might be better if some of you young folks talked less and listened more. I could tell of things that were told me, and things I did myself."

Several new voices broke in. "Please do, old lady; tell us again about the Tom Thumb and the Horse."

Probably the old engine had become tired by this time, for there was silence until noon, when they cut the 17 into another west-bound freight with a great heavy engine on in front to haul it up the Potomac Valley.

CHAPTER IV

HORSE OR STEAM

THE 17 certainly enjoyed the newness of life as her freight passed up the great valley that the Potomac River had picked for itself through the Alleghany mountains. She could not help but ask if the time might be coming when at the head of her own train she would forget the holding powers of her brakes and cease to tremor as she wound along the ragged mountain sides and plunged into the dark dismal looking tunnels.

Entering this new life, it was natural that she should recall what some of the road engines back along the way had told her of the history of the country and the building of the historic old Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Being an engine like those built in the early days, she felt that it was most necessary to learn all she might as to railroading, and she already began to appreciate the fact that life would be most tiring if she had nothing else to think of except herself.

She had paid the utmost attention when an old Baldwin Consolidated had said, "Now child, in answering your questions as to our road, I will say this: in the early days before there were any railroads, our city of Baltimore, basking in the sun on the shore of Chesapeake Bay, served not only Maryland but the great west as a shipping point. At first, a highway picked its way from the city up the Potomac Valley, and over the mountains, to where the rafts and small boats turned the traffic of the Ohio River to the great cumbersome Conestoga wagons that toiled and moved their way either east or west. Later, as the country out beyond the mountains gave life and homes to the multitudes that were seeking their fortunes, the

traffic grew by leaps and bounds. It was not long before the cities further north began to cast longing looks at the business that was passing through the Southern port. The city of Baltimore knew of this, and appreciated the fact that unless they did something to furnish cheaper transportation, the growing volume of manufactured goods moving west, and the ever increasing products of the new country out beyond, would seek a cheaper and easier way between the east and west. Then those who had the city's interest at heart put their heads together, and it was not long before the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was digging its way alongside of the old National Highway, that it too might do its part in the handling of the country's traffic.

"Soon the Ohio, and its many tributaries, which reached out like a hand into the new country, was pouring its tribute into the squat nosed and shallow canal boats that plowed along behind the struggling mules and horses, who, with collars against their shoulders, pulled and plunged as they picked their way along the narrow tow path of the canal.

"All was going well until New York, the thriving city of the north, fearing for her own prosperity and future, did, under the leadership of Henry Clinton, take spade in hand and start digging her own canal. Her job was easier, for her barges could go and come on the Hudson, and her canal could thread the valley of the Mohawk, out across the fertile level lands to Buffalo, the city that was growing at the eastern end of Lake Erie. As years go, it was not long before the Erie Canal was drawing business away from Baltimore, for it was both cheaper and easier to load the western commerce on the schooners and small boats that found their way to and from the towns and cities that were taking root not only on Lake Erie, but on the great waterways that reached into the west as if to grasp the fast-growing tonnage.

"Indeed, the city on the Chesapeake had good cause to worry, and there was a real reason for its prominent men to meet, discuss, and determine on what should be done. Their



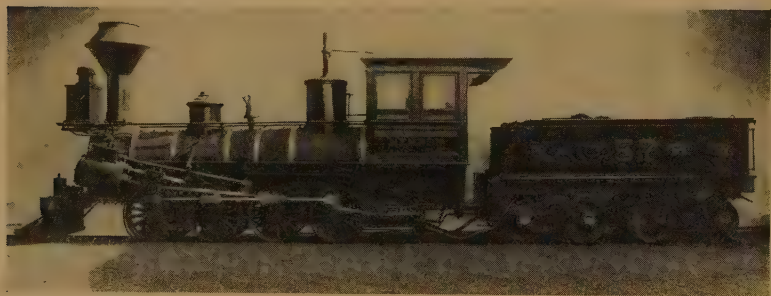
THE WHITE HORSE WON THE RACE



PHINEAS DAVIS BUILT THE "YORK"



THE WILLIAM GALLOWAY (LAFAYETTE)
The first six-wheel locomotive on the B. & O.



THE MEMNON, AN EARLY CONSOLIDATED



THE CONSOLIDATED GREW HEAVIER

security demanded the building of the first traffic railroad, namely, the Baltimore and Ohio. While some encouraged, some laughed, and as of today, others said little while waiting to see how the project might work out.

"All the city watched, shouted and cheered as flat iron straps were placed on great rock ties, and as heavy horses pulled and tugged the small, four-wheeled cars out over the primitive track. It puzzled the engineer to pick a way up the green Potomac Valley, over which the panting horses might drag the railroad cars."

When the Consolidated had told all this to the 17, she then went on to say, "Now little engine, this is where we engines begin to take our part in history. While the mules were struggling on our canals and the wind was doing its part on the lakes, men over in England were pondering on the power of steam and the building of engines that might take the place of both wind and horse. The story came from over the sea that an engine had been built, that it ran on wooden tracks, and was able to haul more than many heavy teams could master. And above all, it was not dependent on variable winds that sometimes allowed the New York schooners to drift about the Great Lakes.

"Our Baltimore men acted. They built our own little Tom Thumb. As you know, poor little Tom failed to win her race with the white horse, but she did prove that there was enough power in steam, when properly applied, not only to move trains on a level track, but to take them up heavy grades."

The 17 interrupted to say, "Who was that white horse, Mrs. Consolidated, and what had he to do with Tom and her proving that steam was the coming power?"

"Well, it was this way," answered the older engine. "When Tom started out on her first trip, a great many Baltimorians scoffed, even going so far as to bet that the white horse hitched to another car on a parallel track could make better speed than the steam affair that the railroad was so confident of. They started off neck and neck, or rather boiler and neck. Tom had

a good fire going, and steam stored away, so she soon passed the horse, while those on her train waved a parting and shouted back at the horse conveyance. It was her race until the belt which was used to run a blower for making a better draft for the fire, flew off. Then her steam went down, and the white horse, using all his tractive power, galloped by and won the race. Yet every one concerned admitted that the engine had the best of it, and if reliable blowers could be designed, there was every reason to believe that engines might do better than horses."

The 17 then asked what happened after that.

"Plenty," replied the Consolidated. "Our people sent out word that they wanted to buy an engine, and when asked what sort of an affair, they replied that it must burn coal, must not weigh over seven thousand pounds, and must draw, day after day, a weight of thirty thousand pounds at a rate of fifteen miles an hour. Not satisfied with this, they specified the size of the wheels, how far they were to be apart, and that the boiler must have two safety valves, and have not over one hundred pounds steam pressure".

"They didn't want much, did they, Mrs. Consolidated?"

"Well, 17, the men that figured on building it thought they demanded too much. But I hadn't finished. There were still other things wanted, such as that the engine must be supported on springs, and also, to be sure that the man running the engine might not take advantage of them, they stated that the safety valves must be out of his reach.

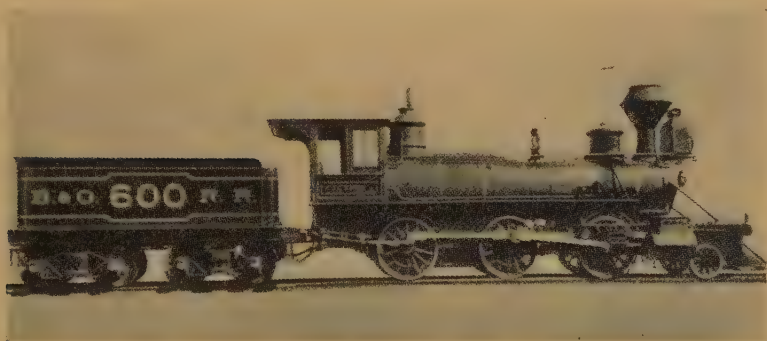
"A man by the name of Phineas Davis had a machine shop in the little town of York. Having faith in steam and himself, he built an engine and named it the York. After some modifications, they managed to make it work and haul the necessary number of tons."

"My, how interesting," said the 17. "And what happened after that?"

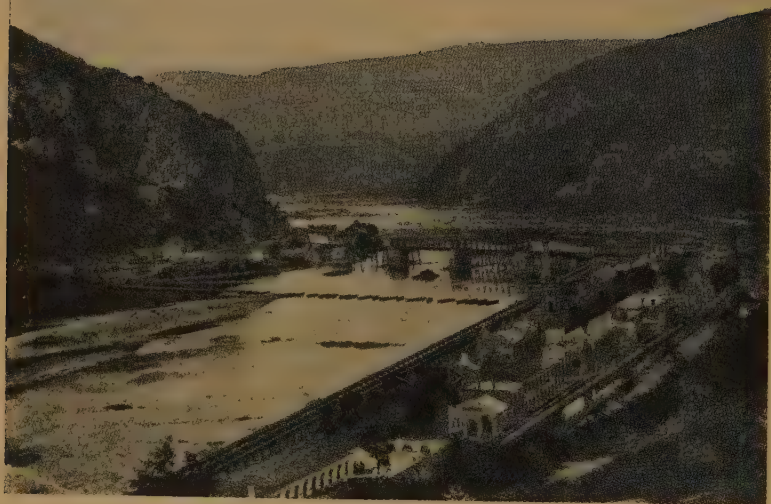
"Oh," replied the other engine, "they found out so much about steam and how to work it, that they went right on build-



WINAN'S CAMELBACK



THE "600" RECEIVED A GOLD MEDAL AT THE CENTENNIAL EXPOSITION, 1876



HARPER'S FERRY AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR



MARTINSBURG ABOUT THE TIME STONEWALL JACKSON SEIZED THE BALTIMORE AND OHIO ENGINES

ing new and better engines, which were soon thrusting their black boilers through the mountain passes out over the road that the engineers had built to Grafton in the mountains. From there they went on and built two lines, one to Parkersburg, the other to Wheeling, both cities being on the Ohio River. And I'll tell you right now little one, that our people accomplished what many had termed impossible."

Becoming more interested, the big freighter went on: "It was not long, little Baldwin, until we iron horses went clattering down the sides of the Alleghanies, right down to the banks of the Ohio, where funny looking boats with either big stern or side wheels waited at the docks. I was told by our engine that made the first trip that every boat about the place blew a blast through their great brass whistles, that went resounding up and down the river and across the land, telling those burrowing under the ground that a market awaited their coal. The message they sounded went out across the great fertile fields of Ohio; yes, right on to the pioneers that were working their way west to Indiana, Illinois and the great West, that a new, lower cost transportation east was at hand for all they might produce."

Many thoughts passed through the mind of the new freight engine that was making its way west. She pondered as to what part she was to take in opening up the great forests and plains that were to be her future home. She questioned herself as to whether she had the real pioneer spirit, and how willing she was to trust herself to the somewhat flimsy railroads that were threading their way out through this new country. Did she think of the bad waters that would scale in her boilers and interfere with her steaming, or of the blizzards that would come circling and whirling over the vast prairies? More than likely she did, but being a sturdy Baldwin, made to pioneer, she must have put any such questionable thoughts behind as she followed on, visioning the day when she would be a leader herself, and do her part in building an empire.

CHAPTER V

OVER THE MOUNTAINS

THE 17 was relieved when they set her out at Cumberland alongside of many locomotives. She had never supposed there were so many in the world, and of so many different types. Here were great engines with big cylinders and little wheels, and off by themselves were three or four beauties; one, a 600, must be a passenger engine, judging from her formal attitude. She spoke in a quiet, dignified way, and listened as if not interested in what some of the heavy freight consolidated were saying. They discussed grades and tonnages they might handle on the more level divisions. One complained that it took the heart out of her when the helper engines on behind did not do their part.

"Yes," the monster she was talking to replied, "I'll say it did. I wish some one would speak to that helper on the mountain. She seems to be getting lazier every day of her life. Yesterday, she appeared to have lost all interest in our train; so much so that I suggested in the kindest way possible, that she use more power. She smoked back that she was doing more than her part, and that if I'd put my coal into steam instead of talk, I wouldn't be complaining about others not doing their work."

"Yes," grumbled the first freighter, "that's about the way helpers talk. They seldom hesitate to remark in a superior way that if it were not for them, we'd never get our trains over the Alleghanies. I'll say they are like many who work only part of the time and so think about themselves instead of about their work."

"You're just right; I was in the helper service a short time

myself, and while I didn't appreciate it at the time, I developed something of the same feeling. It's not hard to explain, either, for where they put us on to climb the mountains, the road engines had about done their all and did not have the power to go on. It gives one a satisfying feeling to get on behind and push, knowing that if it were not for what one were doing the train would have stalled on the hills. It's certainly satisfying when they take you off at the top of the hill and you coast back, just looking at the scenery and watching the poor road engines pounding themselves to death in their struggle up the mountain side. Now that I'm back on the road again, it's as I was saying to that switcher Winans,——"

The other engine broke in with,

"Yes, and I told that helper yesterday, that the road ran a great many years before they ever bought her. Yes, rather rubbed it in, saying those Winans weren't always complaining the way some do that I know of."

The 17 wondered about that hard feeling between engines. Was it because they were built by other makers, and so possibly were jealous of one another? Yes, there was more truth than fiction about a busy engine not having time to become conceited and disagreeable. All during the night, going and coming engines kept her awake, and she learned that the railroad divided at this point, one line leading up a small valley towards Pittsburgh, while the other followed up the Potomac and over the mountains to the Ohio. This must be the most mountainous one, for all the heaviest engines gossiped about that end of the road. She wished she knew on which line she was going west, and that they would not send her off somewhere else by mistake. How did they know which was the right track, with all those lights in the yard blinking their green and red eyes? Yet they must, for they had run the road a long time. Her uncertainty ended when she was again set in a freight, and went curving off on the line that followed the river. Now she'd learn about the great grades the helper engines had so discussed. This trip was certainly an education, and she asked herself if

there were other roads where the engines could talk in this simple way of the war, the great men, and railroading in general.

Why couldn't her people out west let her stay around here for awhile? There was so much said about the value of an education, they should allow her to make the most of this opportunity. No one could ever tell when some of the things you learned might be useful. For instance, suppose her new road had a rush of business; how important it might be if she knew all about this double heading business. She concluded the thing to do was to keep her eyes open and learn all she might.

After the rails had crossed a long flat, the road wound along the river bank, and then up through tunnels and steep cuts. She was confident that some of the great overhanging rocks would lose their hold on the mountain side and avalanche down on the track to destroy them all. Yet no one bothered, as, with engines snorting, they lunged up the grades.

It seemed scarcely any time before a heavy engine coupled on in front. A disagreeable looking creature with a great unpolished boiler, a small cowcatcher, and evil looking headlight, came nosing up behind. She didn't seem to consider the train in the least, for instead of coming on slowly and carefully, she bumped into them as if she little cared whether she hurt that poor little caboose car or not. All the way up the 17-mile grade, the 17 heard their own engine and the helper snorting and puffing up ahead, while the brute on behind was pushing as if it was her job alone to get the train to the top of the grade. Once, looking down between her cowcatcher and the next car, the new engine questioned if those small rails could hold up under this great strain. Suppose some of those nails or spike things pulled out and allowed the track to spread. Then they'd all go tumbling down the mountain side.

She shivered in horror, for at one place on a bad curve, she caught sight below of some crushed freight cars that had gone off the track and were now messed up in a grove of tall pine

trees. What would that General man who had bought her say, if they telegraphed him that they had dumped his new 17 into the river?

There seemed to be a different atmosphere about the next terminal, but being tired from all the pulling and pushing she had undergone on the way up the mountains, she did not look about her, but settled down to a needed nap.

The 17 was later awakened to hear:

"Yes, I'm a Yank, and glad of it. I never tried to break up the Union the way you did. Already, some of you Marylanders admit that you made a great mistake, and how different things might have been down South if you had waited. Yes, and that Lincoln might have bought your slaves, and instead of having back number railroads, you might have fine ones like this." Sneeringly, "Of course, when and where you were built made it quite natural that you acted as you did."

"Yes, and I'm proud of it too. While you're not so very aged, I should think you were old enough not to believe all those Northern engines tell you. I was afraid you'd go wrong when they put you on a Northern run."

"But it happens, Mrs. Winans, that I got my views about your Southern roads from an engine running South from Washington, that went through the trouble. She told me that the Southern roads had never recovered from the War: that the tracks were in bad shape. When she mentioned their engines, she wept oily steam."

"Yes," snorted back Mrs. Winans, "and whose fault is it? Didn't you and your people destroy their country? The one trip I made down the Shenandoah Valley after the War was enough to wring your heart. Fine old plantations were burned to the ground, forests and fields destroyed, and the whole lovely country a waste. Yes, your Grant, Sheridan and Sherman made a wilderness of a rich fertile valley."

The northern engine retorted, "They had to, didn't they? Some even charge you of hauling provisions from your beautiful valley to supply the Southern armies with food. Yes, and

one of your old colonels said that Grant did the right thing when he destroyed your crops, for that brought the end of the War nearer."

Number 17 said to herself, "Here it is nearly twenty years after the War, and these engines are still squabbling about it as if it were but yesterday."

Then she wondered a long time who the two might be. When the sun came up she discovered that the oldest one, whom the other called Mrs. Winans, was a squat looking affair, and had a cab that seemed like a room with windows. Looking closer, she noted the strange machine had four driving wheels on a side, so placed as to make it appear she might tip back and sit down like a dog.

Her musings were broken when the strange machine snapped back, "Now you leave Mr. Winans out of it. I'm thoroughly disgusted at the way you Northerners speak of him."

An angry voice replied, "I'd be too, if I were in your place and knew of the support he gave those who attacked our Northern soldiers in Baltimore, who were on their way to Washington to protect our President. Yes, and if it had not been for that so-called massacre, everything might have been settled. But there is no use in discussing things with you, for you always get mad. And you still have that copperhead look you had when our Western General McClellan came on here with his Ohio troops and drove your Confederate forces into Virginia."

Number 17 had heard enough of copperheads to know that they were very poisonous snakes that slipped out from under rocks and bit people: but how could an engine with a big top on her like hers, slip out from under a rock? She wished that Mrs. Winans would leave so she might inquire about her past.

This wish was granted, when a man climbed up her tail into the house. After pulling levers, he sent her off, whistling through her worn cylinders, "When I get through with this switching, I've got a few things to say to you, Yank."

A nearby passenger engine asked, "Why can't you let the poor old lady alone, 525? It's not her fault that she felt as

her state did. Why not let her alone; she won't last much longer, for she's down to switching now. But listen; there comes one of the Six Hundreds, with Number 8, from Chicago. It always does me good to see her come breezing into the station. While I'm of a lower number, I can't help but admire her and the way she handles her train. Now watch her slow down, for she knows how much her passengers appreciate a good stop."

"Yes, I admire her, too," answered the first engine, "and I know what that train 8 is; didn't I haul her for a long time? Yes, and I'll tell that you've got to work on those curves and hills out her way. While I hated to be put on a lighter train, I'll admit that I was relieved to get away, for that train was wearing me out before my time. Several years more of it and I'd have been ready for the junk pile."

The newcomer sighed as she came to a stop. "Had a hard pull today, sisters. Two extra sleepers, and a bad rail all the way. But we got through all right. Now I'm so awfully thirsty I'm going for a drink," as she went off to the water tank.

The 17, concluding that it would now be all right, asked the lady who had been left behind, in a quiet abashed voice, "Won't you tell me, Miss, who that disagreeable Mrs. Winans was you were talking to a while ago?"

"Oh, she's an old busy-body that has been on the road a long time. She was designed and built before the War by a very wealthy man who did his utmost to get Maryland to secede, so we Northern engines have always felt that she was at one time a good deal of a rebel, herself. I don't suppose it's nice, as my friend over there says, for me to be picking on her. But I'd rather do that than have her begin again on her story of what Consolidated engines with eight driving wheels can do with heavy freight trains. I've heard her say so much about it I'm inclined to believe that Consolidated engines are the coming freight power. Yet we passenger engines needn't worry; for it will be a long time before they get anything better than we are."

The new engine returned, "Yes, I believe you're right, for

I'm just out of the shops, and if there was anything better than an eight-wheeler for all around work, I think I would have heard of it. Yet, I'd kind of like to have been a ten-wheeler."

"Oh, you're too light for ten wheels, little sister," she sighed, "yet I'm inclined to think that it's only a question of time until we go off on the branch line service. Suppose it can't be helped, for we all have to get old and give our jobs to newer engines."

Being very young, this did not disturb the 17, so in a few minutes she said, "Miss, I heard you tell Mrs. Winans she was a copperhead. Now won't you tell me how an engine can be a snake?"

The larger engine chuckled as she answered, "Oh, we old war engines called those who did not try to help the North during the War Copperheads, for we felt that they wanted the South to win. I imagine we got the name from our men, for they called Northerners who wanted the South to win, 'Copperheads'."

"What a funny thing to call them."

"Not so peculiar, sister. You know a copperhead is a vicious snake that hides off in the rocks distilling poison, and, without warning, digs his ugly fangs into those he wishes to destroy. That's what some in the North did during the War, so the name copperhead seems very well adapted to them."

After a silence, the older engine spoke again. "After you get over into Ohio, you won't hear so much war talk. All the way from here to Washington, our road was being attacked at one place or another all through the trouble, and as we have still a number of the old War engines in the round-houses, they usually keep everyone awake with the stories they tell of the past. Well, good luck, little lady; hope you will like the West. Guess you will, too, for every engine that has gone out there reports that while the work is hard and rough, they love the country."

CHAPTER VI

I'M A U. P.

WHILE they were again cutting the 17 into a freight, she heard a man who was running affairs, say to one she supposed was the conductor:

"Is that new western engine all right? We've been getting telegrams to rush her along. See to it, when you get to the next division point, that they send her right along on. For unless we make good time with her, we are not likely to get the rest that are to be sent west, and don't forget, we need the business. She's not a bad looking engine, is she? About right for the new road she's going to."

How it did appeal to the 17 to get out where people no longer called her "little one." Perhaps when she got out in the real West, they'd say, "That's a fine Baldwin, but perhaps a trifle heavy for us."

Her musings ended as a cheerful voice with a western drawl spoke up.

"So you're going west, are you? So am I, back home again, where they know how to railroad."

"And where is that, Mr. Boxcar—for I can't see your name, only some numbers and letters on your back end."

"Me?" came the answer, "Oh, I'm a U. P."

"And what's a U. P.?"

The car answered with some surprise. "I supposed everyone knew of the U. P., or to be more exact, the Union Pacific, runs from Omaha to the Coast. And I'd say my road has an interesting history, too. I've been on it so long that I know it by heart."

To show she intended to be a real Westerner, the 17 answered,

"Won't you tell me about your U. P.?"

"Well, as I've nothing else to do, I might as well. But wait, for I've got to keep my mind on my brakes for a few minutes. It's all hills along here and if your brakes let go, we all might go into the ditch."

"Then do watch your brakes, U. P., for I have an important engagement out in Michigan or Wisconsin or some such place."

"Evidently you'd prefer to have me watch my brakes than tell you of the West."

"Oh, not at all," answered the 17, but can't you tell me of the S. P. and watch your brakes at the same time?"

"I might, but to be frank, I'd be better pleased if you did not refer to the S. P.; none of us U. P.'s care for that road."

"Why not," asked the 17, "isn't she a good road?"

"Some say it is, but we hardly care for Southern Pacific, for she's always after our transcontinental business, that she hauls 'round Robin Hood's barn."

"I've never heard of Mr. Robin's barn before. Is it out west of Chicago?"

There was a chuckle as the car responded. "Oh, Mr. Robin has numerous barns all around the country, and not only railroads, but a great many people evidently prefer going around than to cutting straight through, and so saving themselves and others time and annoyance. You'll know more about Mr. Robin's various barns some day, and you will find out about red tape, too."

"And what's red tape?" asked the 17. "A kind of cloth, isn't it?"

"No, it's more like rope than anything else. When folks are not ready to do a thing, or perhaps don't know what to do, they bundle their job up and tie this red tape around it, knot it all up, so it takes more time to untangle it than if it were properly attended to at the start. You'll know more about that, too, when you get older. But don't worry, for you won't be as much troubled out where you are going as if you remained East, for there's less red tape out West."

"You speak, U. P., as though someone had red-taped you."

"Red-taped me?" he repeated. "I'd say they had. Kept me up in a New England yard behind a lot of old wornout cars for ten days, waiting, I presume, for something to turn up, so that they might load me for our own line; a nice thing too, for my own folks were wanting every car they could lay their hands on. That was red tape, Number 17. They should have loaded me to Chicago on my way home, as they finally did. Then they would have saved time and trouble, to say nothing of the tiresome time I had in that uninteresting yard. No one to talk to but a bunch of small bodied New England cars, who didn't say anything but 'aren't we having a nice rest'."

After some thought, the new Baldwin replied, "I can't see why, if they had something to load into you, they didn't do it the day you were emptied and then start you right back home."

Waiting for the brakes that had been slammed on his wheels to loosen, the U. P. answered, "Because, 17, they were expert red-tapers; and let me tell you, and take it from one who knows: if you ever have a job to do, don't tie it all up with uncertainties before you get started. But about our Union Pacific—do you know anything about it?"

"Very little except it seems to have very nice boxcars."

The new engine heard above the grinding of the brake shoes, "You'll do all right, 17."

"I'll attempt to, but what do you mean?"

"Little, except that journals run easier in oil than in grit."

"Now, I must ask you again; just what do you mean by that? Tell me of this oil and grit you mentioned."

"Well, Baldwin, as to that, you'll find as you go through life, that those who put oil on their own and other people's bearings have a much easier time than those that use grit."

"Why is that, U. P.?"

"For the simple reason that dirt in a bearing causes hot-boxes and all sorts of difficulties for every one concerned."

"But what's that got to do with me, and your saying I would get along all right."

"Not much, 17, except that I imagine that you are the kind that will use oil."

"That's interesting," returned the 17, "but won't you inform me about your U. P."

"Well, little was done about our building until the War: then Lincoln appreciated the fact that the North had to have quicker transportation to the Pacific."

"Why did he feel that way U. P., for certainly there was little 'way out your way so many years ago?"

"You're right, but he knew something had to be done to prevent the South from attempting to take California into the Confederacy."

"I cannot see, Boxcar, why they were so anxious to do so, for it's so far from the South, and I cannot see what good it would have done them even if they had got that state."

"They wanted her Baldy, so that they might carry slavery into that new country, and have more senators and congressmen in Washington to carry out their own wishes. Anyway, the North demanded that the road be built, so the Government appropriated a great deal of money and donated a tremendous amount of land to those who were willing to risk and undertake its construction. They started to build from the Missouri River and struck straight for the Pacific. It must have been exciting, for the Indians made them all sorts of trouble, and as for buffaloes—one old engine told me of the times she had to stop to allow the great herds to cross the track. Even now, when I'm out on the prairies, I see huge piles of old, whitened bones waiting to be shipped East. Yet the Indians were worse, for they shot and scalped everyone they could get their hands on."

"Yes," replied the 17, "A Northern Pacific car I rolled west with said her line had the same trouble with Indians."

The mention of another competing road annoyed the U. P. for he sharply answered,

"Well, as you're more interested in what a N. P. told you, I'll stop. You'll see and hear a great deal of those N. P. fellows before you get through, so if you're interested you better consult them."

The 17 heard him grumble, "Wouldn't be so bad if I didn't have to brake for you, too."

Then there was nothing heard for some time but the rumbling of the heavy train and the grinding of brake shoes, as the men ran over the tops of the cars with sticks, twisting the wheels that set the brakes, as the train thundered down the grades to the Ohio River.

Before reaching Wheeling, the car spoke again in its first cordial voice, saying, "What are you mad about, Baldy?"

"I'm not mad. I've been so interested in watching the coal mines, and the heavy trains that I must have forgotten to speak."

"Well, I'm glad you're not peeved: kind of thought you were. Guess I sort of lost my temper the way I usually do when folks talk of the S. P. and N. P. Like as not, they have the same feeling towards us; for," with pride in his voice, "they know that the Union Pacific is the best transcontinental, and that it's the line of the Overland Mail."

"That's most interesting, but what is the Overland Mail?"

"Haven't you ever seen the colored pictures of the Overland Mail? They are certainly wonder pictures. We have them in many of the hotels and stations around the country. It's our train that carries the United States mail over the prairie and mountains to San Francisco. You ought to see her, 17, as she goes flying over the prairies like a great eagle."

"But don't the N. P. and S. P. have fast mail trains, too?"

"Possibly, but I've told you before, I'll be obliged if you do not mention them again."

Forgetting herself, the 17 snapped back,

"You were right when you said you could not hold your temper. I trust that I may find that the N. P. and S. P. cars have more self-control. All I hope now is that they may set

me in somewhere else, for you've got the most uncomfortable coupling I've ever felt."

In return the car answered, "Why not use a little more oil and less grit, sister." Then all was quiet up and down the Ohio River.

CHAPTER VII

TO THE NORTH

THE 17 was indeed tired when she reached Chicago, for like many of us today, she found the eastern end of the road more interesting than the level rolling prairie and forest country that reaches from the mountains to and past the Great Lakes. In fact, our engine was so exhausted from the wear of her parts becoming accustomed to their bearings that she hardly noticed the great city of Chicago. There was really little to observe, for after circling Lake Michigan, and entering the yards, she ran for miles between long trains of freight cars that only allowed occasional glimpses of the sad-looking suburbs, the muddy streets and dirty colored houses.

It seemed as if the place had received a coat of dismal-colored paint that had been washed by a warm rain. Yet she admitted there was a spirit of doing about the yards that won her heart.

They reached Chicago late in the afternoon, and it seemed as if the entire night was taken up in switching the new engine from the eastern to the western road. All the road and switch engines she met gave her a cordial reception, all of them saying that they were sorry not to do more for her, but as it was their busy season, they could only stop for a few minutes to tell her of their wonderful city and of the West.

Early next morning the 17 was bound North on a Chicago and Northwestern train. She then began to appreciate her small wheels and being built close to the ground. While she knew the track was safe, it was not as comfortable as the ones back East. If this fairly old track was like this, what would her own new one be? She was perturbed on the single track for the sidings had numerous trains waiting for her freight to

pass. Up near Madison, an engine with a peculiar looking diamond stack, advised her not to worry; saying that the dispatchers who ordered the trains up and down the road knew their business, and besides they didn't have nearly as many collisions as they used to.

"Of course we expect to run off the track occasionally, but as the ground is soft, we're seldom ever badly injured, and in case we are smashed up, it isn't so very bad, for we're taken back to the shops, given a good overhauling and a fresh coat of paint."

The engine continued, "In fact, the last time I collided I got my frame cracked, smashed my bumper beam, lost my stack headlight, and had, besides, a number of minor injuries; yet I was rather glad to get my boiler overhauled, for it had been giving me trouble, and it was fine to get back to the road with my newly turned wheels, for their tires had been rutted like a country road."

The 17, aghast at the casual remarks her new friend made on wrecks and collisions, asked, "Didn't your cracked or broken frame cause you great pain?"

"Sure it did, but as others before me have had broken frames I said little. Yes, I did enjoy my visit at the shops, for I learned all that was going on."

Deeming this an excellent opportunity to satisfy her curiosity on leaky flues, the 17 questioned,

"Are you much troubled with flues, 121?"

"Troubled—I'd say so. In fact, most of us are." After pausing as many do when they consider their symptoms, she continued, "Yes, and I'm not altogether satisfied as to the condition of my crown sheet at this very minute: in fact, I'm inclined to believe some of my stay bolts have already given 'way."

"Then why don't you report it, Miss C. and N. W.?"

She received the curt reply, "I'll report nothing. You'll learn it's not popular to report your ailments when everyone is busy. I did once, and after they had spent hours looking me

over, they pronounced me all right. When I got back to work, my friends asked how the invalid was, and I didn't hear the end of it for months. Now I'd rather give 'way than complain. Then, we've got too much business moving now for any engine to be ailing. When this grain rush is over, perhaps I'll lay off for a bit and get fixed up.

"But to change the subject. These are pretty lakes out here, aren't they? Nice water, too, and I'll say there's nothing like good water to keep you in shape. You'll have good water up where you're going. No, you'll not have to worry about that. Good water, nice wood, and with the kind of boiler you've got, I don't guess you need worry."

"Why are you so sure about me and my boiler?"

"You are a Baldwin, aren't you? And all Baldwins are always bragging about their boilers and how well built they are."

"And who built you, 121? Haven't you got a good boiler?"

"Oh, I'm a McQueen, if anyone should ask you."

"I never heard of your make before. Where were you built?"

"Up in Schenectady, in old York State, and even if I do say it who shouldn't, everyone knows what a McQueen can do."

She glanced up. "See that freight coming in from the North? Well I've got to take it South." After a lapse. "Never been out on our Omaha line, have you, 17?"

"Oh, no, I've never been much of anywhere, but why do you ask?"

"No special reason, except that it would interest you to see the Overland Mail go flying by."

This sounded so familiar, that the new engine was not surprised when she heard,

"Haven't you ever seen the pictures in the stations, of our Overland Mail? I don't know much about art but those colored pictures are certainly fine."

The 17, smiling a bit, answered, "A U. P. car told me the Overland was their train."

"Yes," growled the C. and N. W., "just like all the rest of those U. P. cars: they are always bragging of their road. But let me tell you the Overland is as much our train as it is theirs. We handle it between Chicago and Omaha, and if you'll not repeat it, I'll say the way we have to run to make up for the time they lose west of Omaha—well, I'll say if it weren't for us Northwestern McQueens, the Overland wouldn't be on time at Chicago and Omaha as often as it is."

"But you don't think McQueens are better than Baldwins, do you, 121?"

"Maybe not. Some like McQueens, some Cooks, some Rhode Islands: in fact, just between ourselves, if I weren't a Schenectady, I'd rather be a Baldwin than any other make. And for a nice fit engine, I like your looks as well as any I've seen in a long time. Guess you and your class will make a name for yourselves. Well, so long," as she steamed off.

That night the new engine was 'way off at a junction point up in Wisconsin, and early the next morning, she was headed not for Minneapolis, but for a place they called Turtle Lake. As the local freight she was on was continually stopping to cut in and out cars, and waiting on passing tracks for other trains, she had time for long talks with engines along the way. Their own engine, who had puffed up and stopped on a nearby track, opened the conversation with,

"So you're going up North, are you, sister?"

"Yes," replied the 17, and after a glance, "I thought all you Northwestern engines were McQueens, so why do you call me 'sister'?"

She received the short answer,

"I'm not a Northwestern. I'm an Omaha."

The new Baldwin answered, "Then perhaps you've had that wonderful Overland Mail I've heard so much about. Isn't it fine to run such a train?"

"No, I never have: and don't think because they call us Omaha's, we all have to run into that town. We have fine trains of our own. Every one admits we've got the best line

from Minneapolis to Omaha, to say nothing of the short route between the Twin Cities and Chicago, but that's not the line I run on."

Receiving no response, the Omaha went on, "If you'd used your eyes, you'd have noticed that I wear the round Baldwin plate that you do. There are a lot of us up this way. Don't suppose you noticed the eight wheeler they hooked on to the Limited back at Elroy. Probably you didn't, for it was dark."

"Was she very large and handsome?" asked the 17.

"Yes," was the answer, "she's big and does her work. That's all any engine can do." Then preparing to leave, "I don't suppose you've ever been up to this place you're going, have you sister?"

"No, have you, 121? What's it like?"

Now getting a full view of the speaker, she forgot her first question to say, "My, what do all those letters mean on your tender?" as she spelled out, C. St. P. M. & O. "I'd think you'd forget your name. What do all those letters stand for anyway?"

As other engines had joked her about her long name, the Omaha replied with dignity, "Those letters stand for the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha. We adopted that name, for our road runs to all these cities except Chicago, and as we sort of belong to the Northwestern family, they put Chicago on. But you are hardly in a position to criticize: look at the name you've got on your tender: Minneapolis, Sault Ste. Marie and Atlantic. I'd say your name is longer than your road."

Started, the Omaha went on, "Course everyone knows of Minneapolis, and has heard of the Atlantic, but who has any idea where that Ste. place is. I've asked more than once when switching cars at your junction. Your 1, 2 and 3 always answer, 'Oh, it's up the track a bit,' as if they didn't know themselves. Yet once the 3 did say she heard the Captain (he's the engineer that's building the road) say to the Old Man (he's the General Manager), that he hoped that they wouldn't be

held up at the Soo by the bridge. That's about all anyone seems to know, except perhaps the Indians, who carry on their backs the engineering supplies that they take to the surveyors out in the woods and swamps."

"I don't care for swamps," answered the 17. "Are there many of them on my line?"

"Swamps," answered the Omaha, "I hear that for three hundred miles or more, there's nothing but woods, swamps, morasses and mosquitoes. 'Course those insects don't bother us, but they certainly do worry all the men, except the Indians. Guess they don't like their taste."

As this pessimistic engine talked on, the 17 felt it would perhaps have been better never to have been built. What kind of place was she going to: all swamps, woods, mosquitoes and Indians? Would they hide between trees and shoot at her the way the U. P. and N. P. cars said they did when their roads were being built?

The 121, realizing that her casual and unthinking comments had depressed the new engine, now tried to cheer her up.

"Perhaps it's not as bad as I made out, for the other end of your road is going to run to Minneapolis, and that's a nice place. And the men who are building your road are a fine lot. First there's your President—he's sort of dignified. Then there's the General Manager—he's a pusher, but they say he's fair and most interesting. After him comes the Captain, who is the Chief Engineer: and everyone likes him. There's a Fox man, and another who's sort of general mechanic and an engineer when they are very busy. Folks say he lives in a log house, and that he's reading and studying most of the time."

"No, you should not have such a bad time, for when you're working for real railroaders that know their business, you'll be so busy and interested that you won't have time to be lonely and forlorn. Guess the only thing to worry about is that your owners won't be able to get enough money to finish your road. And I'd say it would be hard to spend your life running between Turtle Lake and Deertail, or a place of some such name.

Yes, I'll say it would, but cheer up, we can't all be Omaha's, much as we'd like to."

After a long pause, the 17 asked, "What time do you suppose we'll reach my new home, 121?"

"Can't tell, but if we hang around for that freight much longer, it will be late tonight or very early in the morning. I've told 126 time after time she ought to do better. She says she could, if they didn't make her do so much sawmill switching. Anyway, 17, if I were in your place, I wouldn't worry about getting home: you'll be there long enough. Here is the 126 now. I've got to be pulling out. Hope to see you later at Turtle Lake, for we do a lot of switching there. Well, so long."

CHAPTER VIII

THE WILDERNESS

DURING that cool summer evening, the slow freight threaded its way north through the unending woods as the new Baldwin peered off into the moonlight to catch glimpses of many inland lakes. Occasionally her reveries were broken by the train's coming to a bumping stop, as the cars thumped together on their loose coupling links.

As the night came on, the engineer first picked out the switch light that blinked its green eye to say all was well. Then the dim light in the station bay windows would tell him that the agents were still on the job. At first the towns were large and the country or towns ran parallel to the track to slip up beside the platform, from which streets ran up into the town, where lights showed that the night was still young.

As they poked their way further north, the green sentinel at the switch told them to go on, for most of the town was asleep, and the road that drifted down to the station was dismal and forlorn. Further back there might be regular plotted streets that bore the names that some townsite company had bestowed on them. The one struck straight back from the station was generally Main Street, showing more ruts, deeper dust and more usage than the rest.

On this dark night, an occasional light glowed on a more prominent corner, to at least suggest that the town people or those from the woods were sitting around a cozy saloon telling of themselves, their farms, or of how much the lumber mills out their way were sawing. On a corner across the way, bulbous glass bottles filled with red, blue or other colored liquids squatted on pedestals before kerosene lamps, to advise the

seeker of drugs that their shop was prepared to serve the community day or night.

When the train whistled and pulled in, doors would open in the low one-story buildings that strove to be dignified behind their false fronts, and a pretentious, highly ornate kerosene lamp would do its best to shed light across the plank sidewalks to pick out the lines of a white posted rail-tie bar that served during the summer either as a roosting place for the town's least bothered workers, to sit and swing their heels; or as a hitching place for the tired horses that had dragged their wide-tired wagons long distances through the dark forest.

Here and there on their rutted way, they had passed log houses in the clearings, where men with axe and fire had driven the wilderness of oak, pine and hemlock from their very doors, that they might live and raise their families in this new country.

Could any new and ambitious engine fail to ponder on what all this was to mean in her own life? Was she to become a part of this new rough land: would she be able to aid and serve these, as it seemed to her, almost forsaken settlers: would they turn to her for relief and assistance, and on her part, would she become part of their lives? For she knew the part that she must take if she was to become a credit to herself and her builders.

At one small town a lantern blinked as it threw its rays on the tired feet that dragged a weary, slump shouldered figure into the drug store—what was she to be to him and his? Would his call send her hurrying to some sick child or bent shouldered woman who needed immediate assistance? What was she to mean to that man who was staggering down the street? Some day a great towering pine might fall and grind him into the earth. The whirling saws of a mill might catch and tear their way through his clothing, and go ripping into an arm or leg. Then would they bring him to her, as was their right, and demand that she should do her part in rushing him to a hospital to be bound or sewed up, or they might ask

her to take his body back to those who had once known and loved the broken body.

As she rolled along she realized that a new engine had plenty to think about.

During the night the moon, a great golden disk, gloried the night, to light the rugged limbs of a tall pine, that until now had shadowed itself against the black forest. She hoped that her life might be like that, and that she, like the moon, might bring a glow into the lives of these people, and make things easier for them.

She felt an assurance in her black body that she was to be a vital thing in this country, and a real part of her railroad that was pushing on east, that it might serve those tilling the fields out on the far prairies, and others, in the great mills, who were grinding the wheat that was feeding the world. She hoped all might be happier for her coming, and looked forward to the days when she would push or pull the construction trains with their loads of ties and rails, to the track end, that her own Soo road might reach out and do the things that only a railroad can do for its people.

She was entranced as she went winding north this clear, moonlight night, here to circle along the edges of a silver lake, there to go throbbing over a wooden trestle or bridge that reached over a spring-fed brook which bubbled its clear waters under the hanging cedars, and spidery leafed birches, that it might reach the shadowy, sandy shored lake. She knew, 'way down in her iron and steel bones, that she was going to love this country, and dwelt on the days, when with a light load and a loving engineer, she would go winding off through the strange, quiet, impenetrable forest into the bright sunlight.

It was a happy little 17 who drifted off into sleep as they plodded slowly along. She knew nothing of the villages they passed, nor the green eyes in the night that told her own engine that the main line was clear. Had she been awake, and asked why more of the side tracks did not have stations, she would have been told that there were not enough people in this north

country to make stations necessary. If she had further questioned why that poor, lonely station with its one single light was 'way off there by itself, even hidden from the light of the moon by the great trees that shadowed all, she might have learned that it was only a telegraph station, where perhaps, an old bachelor, or a man with wife and several small children held on in this almost unknown spot, for it was his job to pass on the orders he received from the vigilant train dispatcher who sat at his key far off in some great city, watching over the welfare of his trains, his people and his road.

Did she ponder during the night whether her builders 'way back in those dingy buildings in Philadelphia were conscious of what she was to do: did they know the part their engines were to take in opening and building up this great country out beyond Chicago? Were they doing it simply for the sake of money, or because they recognized that their engines were a necessary part of the great country that was coming to life under the hands and guidance of strong, vigorous men? Men who visioned future homes, farms and contented people in these woodlands.

She remembered a man at one of the small stations who had spoken of the ever watchful deer that hid in the glades of the forest, and of the wolves that howled at night, and sought their soft-eyed prey, pursuing them through the winding trails. And he had spoken of the lonely prairie, where the tall grasses grew to hide the nests of the wild birds, and to shelter them from the lean-nosed and bushy-tailed foxes that wandered at day, and sat off on far hills barking off into the night: and of the cowardly coyotes that wailed at the moon, telling all the world how brave they were at night when there were none to molest them.

It was early in the morning, as the sun began to drive the dark back into the forest, that her train came to a halt. There was a swinging of lanterns, a throwing of switches, and almost before she knew what had happened, she was shunted off, not on a switch, but on a track that reached out beyond a group of

log and frame buildings, where the approaching day was bringing things to life. The strengthening light brought out a yellow, wooden station where all might see the sign "Turtle Lake." So this was to be her home. And was that shabby shed-looking building off on the north side the round-house? Yes, it must be, for there in the dim light, she saw a small engine with a large wood-burning stack, with the number "1" painted on its sand box.

There could be no doubt about it, for the squat little thing bore the same letters, M. S. Ste. M. & A., on her tender. Farther up the track, was another, the number 2, showing a thin cloud of smoke as it drifted out of her great balloon stack.

Life did not seem as easy and delightful on this chill summer morning as it had the night before. Dispirited, she asked herself if she would ever get in the same dilapidated shape as those two poor creatures? Would she, like them, so lose her self-respect as to forget cracked bumpers and rusty stacks, to say nothing of cracked headlights and forlorn looking cabs?

The tracks themselves were enough to make an old engine, accustomed to such conditions, discouraged, but to a new one just off a great, well-conditioned railroad, it was enough to break her heart.

Some time later, small puffs of fluffy wood smoke began to curl from the rusty stove pipe back on the shed of the largest log building. Why was there no one around to give her a welcome? Didn't they expect her? And worst of all was the small switch-stand with its red target, that told her plainly that she was here to stay. Ahead, light rails with battered ends led off into the sullen looking woods, and the unknown beyond. She no longer wondered that the 1 and 2 had told the Omaha 121 that no one seemed to know where the road was going except out through the swamps and mosquitoes. The boxcars, in their shabby brown paint, showed discouragement, and the more numerous flats, with their loads of ties and rails, sagged in the middle, as if they too, were tired and cared little whether they ever went out on the road or not.

What a dreadful place to come home to. The round-house that she so hoped to enjoy was built of long, straight boards, and to keep the wind and snow out, cleats had been nailed over the open joints, and a man of an economical frame of mind had painted her future home a freight brown, to save money. She asked herself how she was ever going to endure it. And what kind of men could her new associates be to run such a railroad? Why, if they were so interested in its future, were they not about?

As if in answer to her unspoken question, a man swung open the door of the log house. While slipping his red and white suspenders over his shoulders, he yawned and stretched out his arms, as he sleepily looked off where the road disappeared into the trees. She saw his uninterested expression vanish as he turned to look towards the connection. Then all alive he started toward her, changed his mind, turned and flew up the steps of the house, calling as he went,

"Say Charlie, the number 17 is here; and you, too William," as a window jerked up on the second story, and the head and shoulders of a man leaned out. "She's a little beauty, too; the finest thing I've ever seen. Get your pants on and come out."

The big man they called Charlie came bounding out, saying as he tucked his shirt in:

"I'd say she is. What will William say when he sees her? He's likely to wear himself out perking her up."

Here, the said William came hurrying along, and told them, when his opinion had been sought, that she looked all right.

"Yes, what we need now. With her seventeen by twenty-four inch cylinders, and that boiler, she should handle," he hesitated, "at least eighteen cars. With her, we should be able to take care of that Cameron mill, that's always ordering cars. Yet, I'm kind of afraid the General and the Old Man will want her on construction."

The 17 heard them with delight as they pointed out her fine points.

The big man announced with emphasis, "She's better than

the Omaha's got, and she's painted up just the way I like to see an engine painted."

The leanish William, in a manner that bespoke New England, answered, "Paint's important to keep the wood work, but her boiler and working parts are the important things; they are of more interest to me than your paint. As I was trying to explain to you last night, Charles, when you were feeling so funny, that an engine with a steam pressure of one hundred and forty pounds and seventeen by twenty-four inch cylinders, with her size wheels, and the weight on them, she should have a tractive power of——"

He was interrupted when a call came sounding out, "Breakfast, fellers; come and eat."

Catching sight of the 17, the cook, half out of breath, came scuffling over, in felt slippers, saying between puffs, "When did she come, and ain't she a beauty!"

He was the first to climb into the cab. Pushing open the window, he called down to them, "Say, but she's fine inside. I never did see so many fixings before." He grinned. "Say, William, she's got so many brass parts you'll have to be shining her the rest of your life.

"But, as the grub is on the table, you'd better be coming along." Taking Charles by the arm, he added, "She's a bird, all right, isn't she? I'm kind of pitying William and the way they'll make him work on her. Guess his job is cut out for years to come."

"Guess again, Tim, for I'll tell you that William will be driving her before long, and then it won't be so many years before he's pulling the Limited."

"Maybe so, Charles, if our folks can grind enough flour or beg or borrow enough money to put our Soo through, and get the Limited you're bragging about. Yet I'm doubting the money end of it."

"I'm not, with the men we've got behind us."

"Well, what men with the money have we behind us? 'Course I know we have the old Governor and the rest of that

family of flour makers. 'Then I've heard tell of a Captain that's in the lumber business. The once I seed him I'd say from the set of his mouth and his get up he's the sort that means business when he gets set to do a thing.' The cook, after halting to examine a spot where some bacon grease had settled on his apron, went on. "Then there is that other tall one that always seems to be having a good time as if he not only expected everything to come out right but saw to it that it did. Guess they call him Tom, don't they? Has he got money like the rest of them, Charlie?"

"I guess he has, Tim. If he hasn't he'll manage to get it for they say that he's able to borrow money when Wall Street won't even listen to the others."

"Maybe they'll get it, Charlie; being paymaster, you ought to know, but I'd like to know if you've got the money to take care of the payroll, day after tomorrow."

Receiving no answer, he went on, "I'd rather have them save for the payroll than have them spending money on new engines, even if they are pretty, like this one. I've heard tell, they've bought twenty just like her. Wonder how they expect to pay for them? That President of ours must be some talker to be able to talk them Baldwin folks into trusting him for one engine, to say nothing of twenty."

"Yes, he is," answered Charles. "Never met him, have you?"

No, have always been sort of scared to. He's not my sort. Can't tell what he might say: might fire me, for all I know."

"He likely would, Tim. I would if I were in his place, and you gave him the grub you feed us."

"If you're kicking now, Mr. Paymaster, just wait 'till you get what's coming, for I'm going to help the Company save the money to pay for them new engines."

CHAPTER IX

READY

THEIR breakfast was a short one, for all wanted to have another look at their new engine. The engineers and firemen of the numbers 1 and 2 hurried through theirs for they had discovered the 17 on their way to work.

The oldest engineer said to the other, "She's mine, of course. I'll have her, as I have been on the road longer than you have."

"Maybe so," answered the other, "but as you're always bragging how much more work you can get out of the 2 than anyone else can, and as you're always telling me that they couldn't get along without you on the rail and tie trains, they'll of course, want you where you are. I'm figuring on throwing up the job I'm on and taking the 17, and running the mixed train myself."

His senior retorted, "I don't guess you will. What's the matter with the 1 you're so proud of? I've heard that as soon as the track reaches Rhinelander they are going to put the mixed train through, and when the rest of the new engines come, they're going to put on another way freight."

As his listener was paying greater attention to what was being said at the end of the table, he stopped talking to hear Charles say,

"Suppose, William, that your friend the Captain, will come rushing in when he hears what we've got."

"Yes," was the response. "He's on the way now, so we can look for him on the way freight tonight."

Charles replied, "When are you going to get her in shape to go out? I wish she didn't have that big old stack, for I'm afraid she's going to look awfully homely with it."

"It's better to look homely than to set the woods afire. It wouldn't take very much to do it now, with all those dry slashings the right-of-way clearers have left. Some day, the old man will come out, and he'll tear someone to pieces about it. After you finish eating ten or twelve more of those buckwheat cakes, and a pound or so more of bacon, you better come out."

Kicking back his chair, he hurried to the round-house, put on his overalls, gathered in a man that was working around the No. 1, and with a couple of section hands, soon appeared at the side of the No. 17.

"What you doing, William?" asked the engineer of the No. 2 as he came from his breakfast.

"Can't you see what I'm doing?" as he ordered the section men up on the tender.

"Maybe so, but you can't make this connection track an erection shop. We've got to pull that track. Don't you see those ten empties the Omaha set in? We've got to get them out, for all the mills on the road are howling their heads off for cars, and I'm told unless we begin to make money, we may all be looking for jobs."

The other engineman who had come up answered, "But we're hauling a lot of lumber poles and posts, Pete."

"Maybe," responded the other, "but don't forget that we're spending more money than we're earning." Then, turning to the precise one, "Want me to set the 17 over on the house track, William?"

"Well, as you can't jump your empties over her, it might be advisable to do so."

So the little No. 1 backed up, coupled on, gave a wheeze and started for the siding they called the house track. The two Swede section men were sitting with their legs and dirty feet dangling over the tender watching the man who was running the job, as he snatched the grab irons and pulled himself up to the cab.

Catching sight of them, he called out, "Ole, you and Yon take your dirty feet off that lettering."

Grinning back, Ole drawled, "I tank my feet be all right."

He received the curt reply, "I'm not caring what you tank, you pull your feet in."

When the new engine had been properly spotted or placed, the No. 1 collected her empties, gathered in a red caboose, stopped at the station for orders, and soon a light smoke off east showed she was on her way to her job.

After the No. 2 had switched around for a bit she pulled up with two flat cars to what was termed the supply house and platform and the conductor called out,

"Say, William, where are them demmed frogs? The Captain told me to be sure to bring them out today. Says he's got to have four switch stands, P. D. Q. He wants some sixteen-inch bridge bolts, a couple hundred ship spikes, and fifty kegs of track spikes, and says unless I get them to him in a hurry, the track laying will have to stop. Suppose I'd better, for he has to wire the President every night just how many feet of track he gets down each day, and if he doesn't get at least a hundred more than he did the day before, he gets a wire wanting to know if he is sick, or if a summer heat is delaying the work, or something supposed to be funny. I'm glad I don't work for that President of ours."

William answered, "You'd better be, for if you were, you wouldn't have so much time to talk, and that certainly would be a hardship for you. Those frogs and switch stands are with the rest of your wants, just where they should be."

The chipper conductor answered, "Nice engine you got there, William. Going to let us have her, aren't you?"

Noting Ole and his cousin, he called, "Here you, Ole and Yon; Ay tank you better come over here and help us load this stuff."

A snappy voice answered him, "Use your own men; I've got work for these two."

The 17, now all interest, was beinnning to change her mind as to the men who were building her road. From what was said the Captain must be a pretty nice sort of man. As to the

Old Man, the General Manager, she'd wait and see him before making up her mind. The one they called the General must be a fierce sort, yet he hadn't seemed so arbitrary when he came to look her over, while she was being built. Now, as to this thin, precise man; she wondered if he ever became fond of his engine the way she had been told some engineers did. She imagined that he might, if it attended to its work properly. And it had pleased her when he ordered those two Swedes to take their feet off her nice, clean paint.

Now she heard his voice again, "You Ole, and John, you get those two pieces of four by six, lean them up against the end of the tender. Give me that hammer and small pinch bar down by that fish plate. Now get busy."

"But I tank, William, that they be wanting them lumbers to do something with."

"I'm not interested in your tanks, Ole; you get busy."

The efficient one soon knocked off the boards that had secured her headlight to the tender on the trip out. Without help, he swung and twisted it out of the way. Going to the end of the tender, he called to his helper,

"Ole, pass me up the end of that timber; now the other one. Now put their ends against that tie. No, not that tie. Can't you get it straight?"

The engine heard him murmur something as he went over the end of the timber, and then heard a demanding voice say,

"I'd think you two big men might lift a stick like that. Oh, get out of the way," as he grabbed one of the two-by-sixes and planted it against the tie. "Now the others." A minute afterwards, "Now both of you get back on that tender."

He called out to a passing man, "Say, Mike, get me that piece of inch rope in the round-house. Yes, the piece under the bench." And in the same breath, "Ole, get hold of the small end of that stack; you too, John; now both together."

The stack did not move, as its great bulky side was wedged down. Grabbing a plank that he wrenched from the headlight fastenings, the director of operations inserted it under

the rim of the stack. "Now both you Swedes pull at the same time."

One of the Swedes said, "I tank she's coming, William."

"Coming, nothing," exploded his boss. Now with a small block under his plank to get a better leverage, he demanded, "Now both of you Norseman lift at the same time."

Both did, and the cumbersome thing rose up out of its position, and William teetered on the end of his plank to hold the thing up. While told to hurry, Ole hunted in a leisurely way for something to slip under the stack so that it would not slip back.

All during that hot summer morning the 17 watched and listened while they unpacked her various parts and set and bolted on the lightest pieces. Her heart fell when she looked down and saw her great balloon stack for the first time. It was far worse than she imagined a stack could be. She thanked her stars that it had been loaded on her tender back in Philadelphia on a dark afternoon, for how unhappy she would have been all the way out if she had known what the horrid thing looked like. Would her new friends have been so prideful if she had arrived with that thing bolted on her front end? Not a chance of it, except that William man. He evidently didn't care very much how she looked if she'd haul all he wanted her to without setting those slashings on fire. She had a bone feeling that he might some day run her, and that he would be a fair but hard task master.

The engine never knew how they managed it, but William and his two pets Ole and John, with some other laborers that he got his hands on, did, after hours of hard work, manage to get her stack up and bolted into place. They blocked up her long cowcatcher, and after time and trouble, secured it to her bumper beam. Now nothing must do, but that Ole get a piece of waste and wipe off her cab windows. There was trouble about that, for the ever optimistic Scandanavian felt quite confident that an old piece of waste he had picked up near the track was exactly what he needed for the wiping. Several

times during the day, the man Charles came out to see how the work was progressing, and to make various comments about his friend William's helpers. He occasionally threw in a suggestion as to how the job should be handled. The Swedes encouraged him with his suggestions, for they furnished them short rest periods, and they appreciated the flow of caustic wit that took place.

When Tim came out on his steps at six, to call supper, they were halted by a terse voice that advised, "You, John, pick up that wrench, and Ole, you get under that bumper and hold the head of that bolt while he screws on that nut."

"But William," complained Olsen, "our supper, she's waiting for us."

"Let her wait," was the crisp answer. "Now that other bolt."

"But William——"

That occasioned a sigh, and "Why can't men take more interest in their work?" Then, "All right, when we get that nut tightened up, you can go." That done, he turned to them with an ingratiating smile, saying,

"Don't suppose you two boys would like to come out after supper for a little while? It will be nice and cool then, and you can help me do a little more work on this nice locomotive. You'll both come, won't you?"

There was a hearty and unanimous response, "Ay don't tank so."

When the agent came in to supper, he vouchsafed the information that the No. 4 had gone off the track, so that the Captain would not be in till late, and he said, grinning at William,

"I'd advise you to suggest to a certain mechanic that he have his new machine in order before he gets here. Yes, I'd strongly recommend it, for I caught a message on the wire that he sent the Old Man in Minneapolis, that the 17 had arrived, and that he hoped to get her in shape in a day or so. It may interest you to know, William, that he and the President will be out here day after tomorrow, and the main boss is going to ask when

we are to handle lumber out of Rhinelander. And our old excuse, that we have no engines, won't do. Yes, you'd better get your overalls on again and get busy. I'd hate to be in your place if your engine is not ready to run them out to the end of the line when they get here. Sure they'll want your new No. 17."

That night, a lonely figure with a monkey wrench hung about the new engine, tightening up bolts and, as the 17 thought, doing all sorts of unnecessary things. Once he climbed into the cab, and sat for a long time gazing in an unseeing way out of her narrow front windows, as if trying to vision where the track might end, and what it was to mean to him. Several times his hand wandered over to her throttle. This made her wonder how her steam was going to feel, and if she would know how to use it. She felt she probably would, with that firm hand manipulating the various levers that were still a mystery to her.

Already she had a confidence in that hand, for it had a sureness about it as it worked her levers about. Once her William, as she was beginning to call him, climbed down to the ground to look her over, only to return and make a more careful examination of her valves and gauges, as if they were different from those he had seen before. Now when there was no one about, he seemed to have a more friendly feeling.

He was evidently preparing to leave for the night, when a distant whistle was heard off in the pines, and soon a headlight came peering around a curve through the trees, to shed a yellow light on the straight track east of the station. As the train approached, its engine seemed larger than the two she had seen before. It had a Baldwin look about it, and much to her delight, the newcomer spoke, as she drifted to a stop at the station,

"You're here, are you, sister?"

Sure enough, the No. 4 was a Baldwin. Now she would have one of her own family to discuss things with.

William hurried over to the station and went back to a

small car on the end of the long freight train, arriving as a short man stepped down. She saw them talking together as they tramped over her way, and listening, heard her man say,

"She's a very nice machine, Captain; just what we need; ought to haul six or eight cars more than your little Rhode Islands."

"Let's hope so, William. I'm glad you approve of her. They tell me we're to have more like her in a short time. However, what's more to the point, when can you get her in shape to go out?"

The 17 was all interest, when the man in charge said in his positive way, "I'll have a fire in her the first thing in the morning: then we might run her out six or eight miles to try her out."

"Fine," answered the short man through his reddish beard. "I hoped and rather felt that you'd have her in shape. If she's all right, how would you feel about her taking out the General's car? You know he'll be in on the Omaha about noon tomorrow, and the General Manager will be with him."

The 17 shuddered. Why couldn't they break her in on a freight or some other unimportant train, rather than to go showing her off to that cold General?

"Not the slightest reason why we should not, Captain. Would you care to have me handle her?"

"Yes, guess you better, William, for then we won't interfere with our other work." The 17 caught a smile under the whiskers as the Captain said, as the pair of them gave her a parting look, "So you approve of her, do you, William?"

"Yes, very much, Captain; very much indeed."

"That night when the moon came lighting through the close forest, it disturbed the 17, who was having a dreadful dream of tomorrow. Suppose she was unable to keep up steam, and failed when they were testing her ability to handle the number of cars they had bought her to handle.

It seemed hardly any time before she was awakened by the opening of her fire door, and the precise voice saying, "You,

Ole and John, get some kindling, eight or ten sticks of nice dry maple cord-wood, and we'll get up steam before the Captain has had his breakfast."

A Swedish voice replied, "Ay don't tank we can, William."

A stern voice returned, "I'm going to breakfast. You have a good fire going by the time I return."

"Ay ban no firing man, Mr. William. It ain't my yob."

"Make it your job. It's time an able-bodied Scandanavian knew how to build a fire. If you can't, ask your capable countryman to help you."

CHAPTER X

BE SERIOUS

BY the time the Captain, William and the assembled rail-
roaders had bolted their last eggs, steam was rapidly rising
in the boiler, due to the energetic endeavors of the two Norse-
men. It is likely their strenuous efforts were due to the remark
Ole made to John:

"Ay tank if we get the steam boiling, William he sure will
take this new engine right off quick. Then me and you, Yon,
can go and maybe fish for that fish that eat our bait when we
fished last time." This sounding reasonable, Yon helped to
gather and throw the dry hard wood on the roaring fire they
had accomplished.

All questioned the unusual energy on the part of the two
section hands who had been let off their gang for a day or so
that they might help get the 17 into shape. The smile on
Charles' face indicated that he heard Ole tell Tim the cook
"that maybe we get some fishes for dinner."

A boy who had been playing around the engine had crawled
up into the cab, and was vigorously ringing her bell, telling all
in the coming city that the 17 was ready to start. The man
with the brisk manner called,

"You, Willie, get right down from that seat, and you, Ole,
seeing that you are such a fine hand with a fire, you stay on
board and fire—for we're going out on the road for a run."

Spying Yon, he shouted as the Swede pretended not to hear,
"You get that wheelbarrow, pick up all that wood, and put
those two timbers where you found them. After that get some
sand and put under that No. 1 frog. Then you can shovel some
more coal out of that car—yes, and you know which car."

Ole, coming to life, was about to complain, "Ay tank——"

"Yes," answered the man in charge. "I tank you be just the man we want." Turning to the Captain, who stood by his side, he asked, "Shall I pull out?"

A nod from the higher officer, as he seated himself on the fireman's seat across the way, told him to go ahead. There was a slight nursing of the throttle lever, and the 17 felt for the first time in her life the pulsing of live steam as it flowed down to her steam chest. She had a strange sensation when her valves moved and the steam gathered behind, and pushed out her pistons. One connecting rod stiffened as it applied its power to the wheels. Then the other piston moved, and before she had time to appreciate what was taking place, her wheels took hold and she was sliding off down her side track to the open road and the long busy life that she now had begun. After her engineer had called to a brakeman to throw the switch, she felt the flanges of her wheels jam up against the short switch rails, and then a swerve as her William eased her onto the main line. There was a call of "all right" from behind. She felt her strength increase as the throttle was nursed further out. Now, as her life-giving steam flowed through her ports, she began to gather speed. For the first time she realized she was a vital power—before she had been only a thing of iron and steel.

As she settled to her work her parts became as one, and the hand that had given her this life also gave her a confidence in herself that so reacted, that the engineer called across the cab:

"She's all right, Captain—shall I let her out a bit?"

At a nod more steam shot into her cylinders, and again her wheels began to turn faster and faster as she flew over the new track. She wondered with some pride if she could show this speed on a poor track, what she could have done back east on the wonderful B. and O. They went lurching around the curves at what she feared was a dangerous speed, but as her flanges gripped the track she forgot everything except the long straight road that had cut its way east through the sunlit forest.

She glimpsed a deer as it went bounding across the track. Oh, she did hope that her William saw it too, for how terrible it would be to start out as a killer the first day she was on the road.

A few minutes later she heard the Captain say, "This track for five miles is in pretty good shape, so you can let her out and see what she can do."

And do she did. She'd show them what a late Baldwin could do. Entirely taken up with her work, she was somewhat surprised when her steam was reduced and she was stopped at a small station, 'way out in the woods. What was the meaning of it? The Captain, having noted four cars of rails on the siding, guessed that the No. 2 had started with more than she could handle, and then, seeing ten or twelve cars of loaded ties on the same siding, nudged the engineer as he said:

"Let's see what your new friend can do with a load."

Nodding that he understood, the engineer motioned to the brakeman to turn the switch, and hardly before she was aware of it, the 17 went tugging back to the main line with a train of loaded cars. Well, this was certainly different from running light. She shivered as her wheels began to slide. What was the matter that she couldn't get a hold on the rails? This would not do at all. Perturbed and anxious, she gave an extreme effort that sent her drivers buzzing around like a propellor of a steamer, out of water. She lamented at her failure, but hadn't she done her part, or as much of it as she knew how. She was distressed when she heard the Captain say,

"She's a little light on her drivers, isn't she, William?"

"Perhaps, but I don't think so: those weeds have made the track slippery. I'll try her again."

Now as her wheels began to turn there was a satisfying stream of sand poured out of her sand box right down in front of her drivers. How good it felt to her wheels when they ground over the sand, and instead of flying around, settled down and took hold. Now she had an inborn belief that she was going to make it as she felt the weight of each car as it

started after her. How she wished she might look and see how many more were back on that siding that was below the track level. Once she shivered fearing that her wheels were going to slip and she would have to stop again, but the understanding hand gave her a new confidence, and remembering what that old Baldwin back in Philadelphia had said, she did her best.

To those in the cab she seemed to lean down on her wheels as she dragged not only the cars of rails, but those of ties, out on the main line.

How relieved she felt when she overheard her William say: "I thought she'd make it all right, Captain. Now I know it. How about a few miles run? Let's try her on the next hill and then set off her load on the next siding."

The 17 gathered herself together as she saw a long upgrade appear in the distance. She felt more steam in her cylinders as she picked up speed. They fairly flew down the straight track until they hit the long grade. The momentum the train had gathered carried it well along, but there was a gradual slowing down until she was again, as one might say, down on her haunches, giving every pound she had. Up and up they crawled, until she got over the top of the hill. Then she gave a breath of relief as she felt her train lighten as, one after another, her cars came on until her whole train was again on level track.

At noon when the Omaha train pulled up at the crossing, the new engine, with a part baggage and part mail car, stood on the connecting track to pick up the private car that the Minneapolis train had left near the connection. The 17 thought she heard a sniff from the highly lettered Omaha engine when she came in. It might have made her feel very badly several hours before. Now as if to proclaim her own importance, she gave an insulting great puff out of her balloon stack as if saying,

"I'd like to see you, Mrs. McQueen, or whatever your name is, take that train I had this morning over the hill the way I did."

When the Omaha was out of sight she backed up slowly and coupled on to her own private car. For she was now a part of the new road. Peering out behind she saw a large, tall man on the rear platform of the car, as he reached out and signalled for her to go ahead. Even as a beginner, she realized from that wave that he was an old railroader who knew his business. He must be the General Manager or the Old Man she had heard so much about. And yes, there was that dignified man with the side whiskers who had visited her in Philadelphia, and of whom everyone seemed so worried. She wondered if he would still like her and be satisfied with her looks. What would he say when he learned of the way she had handled herself that morning? Would the Captain or her engineer tell him of what she had done?

When her William got the signal he pulled up to their own station and the big man and the dignified one got down from their car and walked up the platform that they might get a good look at her.

"Well, Mr. General Manager," asked the President, "how do you like the looks of my new purchase? I might observe that except for that stack you demanded, she'd be rather fine looking. When we get through to Minneapolis," with a meaning look at his manager, "you can give her one that befits her beauty." He looked up at her engineer. "Been out on the road with her yet? If so, how does she handle?"

"Very well," was the short, precise answer.

Perhaps the dignified man was not as cold as some made out, for with a quiet satisfied smile, he replied,

"Like her, do you? Then why not ask your General Manager to let you have her? How about it?" he added, calling the General Manager a number of letters as if he had been a freight car or engine.

Evidently the question of an engineer had been discussed, for the big man, while reaching up to get into her cab said, "How about it, William? Do you want to take her and go on the road? We're putting on a passenger train next week to

Rhineland. Not because I regard it as advisable," as he grinned at the President. "We don't need such a train, but the General tells me I must: he has questioned me as to how I expect purchasers to go out on our line and buy lumber at one of our mills if they have to ride in our filthy cars. Says he wouldn't, and if he wouldn't, no self-respecting man would."

With a severe expression, he turned to the Captain, saying: "How do you like to have your President refer to your equipment as filthy and unfit for decent men?" And then, rather aside, "How is the 17, Captain?"

"Fine," was the answer.

"Better, Captain, than the two little Rhode Islands you bought and were so proud about?"

"They were what we needed at the time, when we started building. Now we have these new engines that are so necessary."

He received the answer, "Well, I'm relieved, for perhaps you have heard that the General told me when I asked for twenty-five new engines, that he'd think about it. Then the next thing concerning engines was a wire I received from him from Philadelphia saying, 'Possibly it may interest you to be advised that I've bought you twenty-five new Baldwins. So I trust that you can now make some money.' When he returned from his buying trip I asked him what sort of engines he'd bought, and was told the sort I needed.

"In answer I said: 'But General, I never told you what was needed.' With a look of surprise he said, 'Well, I must have read your mind.' On my asking how much they weighed, he told me enough to haul all the lumber I could get.

"It was some time before he gave me any further satisfaction. Then he dropped into my office a few days later, sat down, and after lighting a long black cigar, asked how much track you had laid the day before, and why not more? Then without waiting for a reply, and just as if I were not more than casually interested in these new locomotives, he began,

"'About those new engines I ordered for you, Overman.'

"I sat tight, fearing he might not go on. He stopped, as I expected he would, then looking over on my table at the great piles of unpaid vouchers and bills, he commented,

"See you got a lot of bills; why don't you pay them? It hurts one's credit not to pay his honest bills. It's a most demoralizing habit to get into."

"Annoyed, for many we owed money to had intimated as much, I retorted, 'How in thunder, General, am I going to pay bills when I have hardly enough money to run the road on?'

"So he answered, 'Then why not finish the road, haul some flour, and make some. And I might suggest that until that happy time comes, you go after your lumber business in a more serious way. Yes, be serious.' He then quoted to me as he has many times before, 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.'

"Getting provoked, I told him, with some heat, that I'd been doing nothing but avoid many men wanting their money, and I added, 'It's hard enough to get money to take care of the payrolls without paying old bills. I'm swamped all the time with letters and telegrams from the East wanting money for rails, angle bars, to say nothing of the people up in the woods demanding that they be paid for the ties we got last winter.'

"He said, 'You do interest me—indeed you do, Mr. General Manager, yet I'm inclined to think if I were the general manager of a great coming road I'd——'

"Here I headed him off with, 'Now how are we going to pay for those twenty-five engines you've bought?'

"'You told me you wanted them, didn't you, Overman? Acting on your request I did what you wanted. Now you are going to get them, why get so peeved about it?'

"'But General——'

"'Yes, so you have remarked before, but as I was going to say when you became so excited, and by the way, it never pays to get wrought up, now about all these bills for the material you have managed to acquire, and how it is to be paid for. As I started to remark when you interrupted; if I were the manager of a great east and west road, I'd drop in on the

treasurer of the company and I'd say, "Marsh, I'm sending down some approved bills for you to pay." Then perhaps if you did not lose your temper, and spoke nicely to him, he'd say, "Yes, it might be well for you to do so—some of our bills must be getting quite ancient."

"I answered, 'But General, he's got no money to pay bills with, and you know that as well as I do.'

"'Hasn't he? Well, that's interesting. Perhaps I'd better speak to Marsh and tell him it's not good policy when we're getting started to have too many bills.'

"As he was getting up to go he turned to me and said, as if it were an afterthought, 'I bought you just the kind of engines you wanted, and got them at a good price, and on very satisfactory terms.'

"Scared to death that he'd bought something we could not use, I almost shouted: 'What sort of engines did you get, General?'

"With a look he sometimes has, he smiled, 'I told you once before, exactly what you've been demanding.'

"Probably thinking he'd got me worried enough he went on, 'Eight wheelers, and about as good, too, as the Baldwins can build.'

"'How did you know what to buy, General?' I asked.

"'Perhaps I didn't, but when I'm in doubt I tell those who know more about my troubles than I do, what I want. I told them about the road, our curve grades and everything else I could think of. After due consideration, they concluded we needed a good boilered eight wheeler with comparatively small wheels. Knowing that they knew more about it than I did, or you, either, I told them that what they proposed sounded reasonable, and to go ahead.'

"And I'll say, Captain, our General seems to have made a good purchase."

The Captain smilingly replied, "But what about the bills, Overman?"

"Oh, I saw Marsh and he told me that the General had

managed to raise some money, and for me to send some vouchers down to him. Not too many, for no one knew when they'd get any more. So, Captain, don't splurge."

"I won't, Overman. I'm glad the rumor is true, that the road has some money."

"True for the moment," was the short reply.

CHAPTER XI

BUILD ME STRAIGHT

THE men out at Turtle Lake heaved a sigh of relief when it seemed as if the rumor of additional funds might be taken for a fact. The tie cutters, who had been getting only a small amount of cash, woke with a start when they received checks covering all that was due them. The 17 saw them board the Omaha train for Minneapolis, where, in out-of-date derby hats, and flowered neckwear, they claimed, in the most positive manner, how well they were prepared to furnish even a higher grade tie at figures no other tie man could touch. They had entirely forgotten the now paid bills, and how they had been told that they should cut ties if for no other reason than that it helped clear their road.

Car builders hurried to the headquarters of the road with photographs, blueprints and prices for five hundred or a thousand new cars. With the builders came very prosperous looking old and young men with rolls or portfolios under their arms, prepared to prove that unless the new road equipped its cars with certain new devices, the enterprise would more than likely prove a failure. Other men of a more quiet nature, not so prepossessing and assured, sat as one might say, on the side lines in the outside offices, waiting to show and explain many new and peculiar devices that would make railroading not only safer but easier.

There were more than the usual outbursts of these callers, for the President of the road had been in politics for a number of years, and when his numerous friends and supporters learned what he and the road were preparing to do, they lapped their lean and hungry lips, as they hastened to their old friend the



I WANT THE "17"



OUT ON THE HIGH RIDGES OF THE ST. CROIX

General. He naturally was most cordial to this host of old supporters, and told them how good it was to see them all again. Then they talked politics; who was to run for the governorship, or who should be the next senator. He would ask how Ole Knutson was getting on out in the Red River country, and whether Anderson was still running his paper in Kandioni County. Finally, the visitor, tiring of old friends, might say:

"Now, General, that I think of it, I may possibly be of value to your new enterprise."

Or another might ask him, in rather an impersonal way, if it might not be advisable to run the road a few miles further north, saying, "It happens I have some very valuable timber land up that way which would insure you a good freight business."

The General Manager claimed that he had to entertain most of the General's old friends, and those salesmen who had first visited the President, to receive from him his best wishes and the suggestion that he visit Mr. Overman, who was handling the matter in hand. The said Overman vigorously objected, and had told the General more than once, and quite plainly, that it should be his business to dispose of his own nuisances, for he had more than enough of his own. The almost invariable answer was:

"I'd think you'd appreciate the fact by now, Mr. General Manager, that a road cannot prosper without friends. Now I've sent you great numbers of my best friends, who should help us to a happy and prosperous future." Or he might make other comments of a like nature. At times when he was overly busy, or irritated at some delay, he might tersely remark:

"These people you so object to may be lumber buyers or travelers. If so, not out of kindness, but to help business, you should treat them most cordially, and with your usual tactful consideration."

The Captain out on the line complained that there he received the backwash, or those who, unable to receive satisfac-

tion at headquarters, came to him as a last resort. They followed him like hounds did a rabbit, and he was tired of it.

The yellow Omaha train which stopped at the road's end disgorged men and more men, as the scattered settlement in the woods began to realize what was going on, and that there might be a possible chance to do business, or at least get a job.

First there came from all parts strong, vigorous men, of a scrawny leather type. These generally hurried to the Captain's log office where they first talked, and then pointed with strong, pliable fingers to some place or spot on the long, half unrolled map, as they discussed tangents, curves, grades and fills.

An Indian might tramp in on one of the wood roads, or come silently out of the dark, green forest like a deer. After hanging around for a while with a disinterested expression, he would push open the door of the engineer's office, standing there like a red statue until someone might look up and say:

"Well, what do you want?"

With a "Huh!" he would grunt, "Me want job." An answering nod might tell him that his request was to be granted, as an annoyed voice told him to go outside and sit down.

All the engines watched as more tents and camp supplies came in, for they knew this meant life on the road. Old field engineers and their men who had come in from the front for orders, gathered around to drag and pull the shipments apart. They sorted and selected what they needed for their parties, more than once proclaiming how superior a tent or some other piece of camp equipment was to what they had been using. Axmen ground their axes on the company's stone as they related strange experiences. They all rejoiced. For these old engineers who had been driving their road on when it had little money or credit, had been forced to make the most of the old leaky tents, and to use instruments that took experienced transit or levelmen and good guessers to be able to use them at all. But as the old stuff had been all the small lumber line had, they had made the most of it.

Now every morning the No. 1 or 2 took out a new or a

returning surveying party. By night they might be as far along as the latest division point, and the next morning they piled on the construction trains to get to where their teams were waiting for them. Then came hours and perhaps days, over the newly constructed corderoy roads that climbed up and down the hills and in and out of the tamarack and cedar swamps. The journey seemed endless as the wagons lurched along through the ruts or plunged over stumps and logs. Two or three days of this might bring them to a sudden halt, where the now more trail than road butted against the forest or a swamp. Ahead there was nothing but a line of stakes that showed their black weathered heads, as they followed one another into the unbroken wilderness.

At night the tents would be pitched, and while the heads of the party might be sitting off on a log fighting mosquitoes, they ate their tough, leathery bread, and rescued the baked beans that floated in the reddish tomato juice that they balanced in their tin plates, while a cup of tea or coffee balanced on a nearby log.

The teamsters who had brought them out were in their own crude way discussing the social activities of some lumber camp where they had spent a winter, or certain fascinating ladies dwelling in some new town more than likely located on one of the older railroads.

The white men who expected to remain with the party busied themselves with supplies and equipment, while off yonder in the woods, around a small fire squatted men that the glow of the fire made still more red. What were they thinking? Possibly of this great domain that had once been theirs and theirs alone. One might rightly ask if they believed in a red God of their own. If so, did they not question why he had allowed them, the once overlords of the land, to be pushed and pushed until now they had hardly a place even to sit and watch the expiration of their race?

Did they ponder on the ways of these white men? Assuredly they knew that they were about to lose the last they had. For had they not seen what other rails coming into the unbroken

forests had done? Possibly one of a more stony face than the rest, thought in Indian what the pioneer said in English: that the progress of the white race should not be stopped to maintain the rich hunting grounds of the Indian.

In the cool of the evening the various groups would gather closer to their fires, while the smudge from green leaves would battle with the insects which had gathered about. Perhaps the eyes of some might study flames that occasionally broke through, to send blazing embers up through the dark branches of a pine, to lose themselves like small stars up in the clear dark sky.

First one man, and then another would quietly slip off until all was quiet, except when off in the woods might be heard the dismal howl of a lonely wolf telling of his love for one of his kind, or lamenting to the moon of what this new road was to mean to his wild canine family. All night the mosquitoes toiled. They never ceased their exploring until a reddish sun came up over a pine clad hill, to tell all that another hot, sticky, wearisome day was at hand.

The cook would toss about for a few moments, as he rolled over and tried to shield, with either blanket or coat sleeve, his eyes from the unwelcome sun. Not being altogether successful, he would then kick his assistant the cookee, who shared his bed, and in such terse sentences as cooks are accustomed to use early in the morning, would tell him how he regarded all cookees and their ancestors, finally remarking:

"Say, you get up."

The drowsy answer would come, "It ain't late, and ain't time to get up." Then there would be another more determined kick, and while his lazy helper slowly divested himself of the blankets, his superior instructed his minion as to the building of a fire, and made unnecessary, caustic statements as to the real worth of his helper. Later his own capable hands would be at work, and soon there would go resounding through the forest the call that informed all that it was time to get up. Presently the white men of the party would be drinking their

black, muddy coffee, and while a few dismembered the tough fried eggs with their two-limbed forks, others of experience managed entirely with the keen blade of a wooden-handled knife, and there over in the woods around their still small fire, the Indians, without utensils, easily contrived to serve the cravings of the inner man.

An over abundance of time was not allowed for breakfast, for there was a long, hard day ahead. Quickly the tents were thrown down. The Indians, the bands of their pack straps loosened, sat hunched on the ground, while their burdens rested on logs or stumps.

The chief of the party would give the word and off they would trail. He in front led the way with the transit man, and his front or rear flag man carrying his instruments, while behind trudged the level man and his chain men: trailing behind the remaining white men would come, and bringing up in the rear the former princes of the land with their loads, not only supplies for the white men, but their own mental burdens, such as they had. On these long hot days, the line threaded its way eastward to where the stakes stopped, and then perhaps at the edge of a wooded lake with sandy shores, or in a pine grove on a river bank the burdens would be set aside. If they had arrived after a long, hard day, a camp, such as they would strike on the march, would be established, the usual fires built, and the usual supper of bread, cold bacon and hot coffee, would be supplied, while the Indians sought their own repasts.

Early the next morning the cook would shelter his eyes, the cookee would again be kicked, and the breakfast eaten. After the Chief had chosen the proper location for each tent, he would turn to Gus or Al, who with axmen, would fell any tree or trees that might be in their way. Then while some of the workers cleaned off the slashings and underbrush, others roped the tents and sorted and placed supplies. Soon the Chief's tent, and then his larger canvas office, would be pitched, so that he might not be further annoyed or delayed. In the meantime the cook had been barking at the men, demanding his

place be cleaned and his tents be put up, and they, knowing that their well-being depended largely on the purveyor of the food, turned vigorously to his department, and saw to it that he had a fit shelter under which to cook. If the company had been generous, they would even set up a canvas fly outside of the cook's own place.

When these first duties had been performed the men would turn to their own tents. Some were casually put up where rain could percolate in, to lie in puddles, making everyone's life a burden, especially at night. Others would give more attention to their domiciles, going so far as to fell trees for the side logs of their beds: on these they would notch in small saplings and with stems down, stick in fluffy balsam boughs, and on top of these they would stretch their blankets. On what better place could a tired woodsman rest his weary body than this, with a pillow made up of his shoes wrapped in his heavy coat?

On the first day the Chief of the party and his head men might take a cold lunch and a pail in which to boil their tea, and go reconnoitering off ahead to find or pick a possible or a better line for their railroad.

The cook, if well inclined, and to show his heart was in the right place, or to prove what an excellent cook he was, might give them an excellent example of his handiwork. After dinner there would be a further cleaning up, and the niceties of the camp arranged. Perhaps a few who had brought fish lines and hooks along, might wander off, and after cutting long thin saplings, would return before supper with a string of firm greenish black bass that would appear for supper in a coat of golden cornmeal.

Other of the men, and they were in the minority, would seek a nice sandy shore to go plunging into the clear water, where they splashed and floundered about like small boys, and a minority of the first minority might get out their shaving tools, a piece of mirror and start beautifying themselves.

All was happiness when the clear cool, sparkling night sent them off to bed.

Next day all would be ready to start the work. The cook kicked the cookee: the bacon, bread, coffee and cakes with molasses were disposed of, the Chief shut himself up in his tent with the maps, while the head instrument man set up his transit over an old stake with a hidden tack, that had been left by the party who surveyed the preliminary line. He twisted the screws on the bed of the instrument, as he called to his head man with his red and white painted pole or flag, to go ahead, waving with an arm for him to move either to the right or left.

The head man, dragging his hundred foot steel chain, pushed on and came to a stop, where he drove a stake. Again he went on until possibly a tree or some brush hid him from his instrument man. At his call the axman would go ahead, clear a sight through the underbrush, or attack some tree that stood in their path. Soon the forest would resound to the blows as the cold steel of an ax cut great flakes of white chips from one side of the tree, while the ax on the other side chiseled its way in. As the stately old monarch began to waver, there would be a call, "Look out!" as the great tree went careening down to earth, tearing and rending the limbs of its old neighbors. The front flag would now get up from his easy forest seat where he had been watching the axmen, and go plunging on.

Over the flat lands, this marching ever forwards was most enjoyable to a man who loved the woodlands, but when the line pierced through the woods and went heading into a swamp where the winter surveyors had gone across on the ice, his was not a cheerful task at the best. As the mosquitoes had passed the word of his coming, they circled about his head in droves, landing on his neck, face or hands, wherever the biting was best. It neither cheered nor helped to have his Chief call out, "They are not so bad when you get used to them. More to the north."

This more to the north was easy to say, but more difficult to the advancing man, who was teetering on a mossy hummock and did not regard with favor the black and deep water that lay

to the north. However, he, knowing from the past that it would do no good to argue the question, would step off hoping for the best, but finding just as he had expected, he sank to his waist in the wet ooze that slopped about him.

"Higher," called his boss. Stumbling, he raised his flag and floundered on while those behind, who had the option of going around, plied him with ribald remarks and offered him their cheerful sympathy, as he dragged himself from the nasty morass like some foul creature of the mud.

So it went from day to day, each night finding them further from the camp than the night before, and with a larger walk home. Sometimes a cold rain hit them, or water dripped from the trees to run down their necks, finally to gather in their shoes, where it sloshed around with that which had become warmed by association earlier in the day.

Yes, surveying is nice when it is nice, but something else when it is not.

CHAPTER XII

"THE 99"

THE 17, out in the hot sun, watched her officials as they went around what she assumed they termed their first terminal. They first visited the agent, then spent some time in an office sort of affair. Then, after inspecting the round-house, they returned to their car and were off to the east. On they went, past the siding where she had taken on her load, and up the long grade. Now she was soon to find out what was out beyond. She thoroughly approved of the strong hand that piloted her over this strange track, and as she realized that she was more and more responsive to his touch, was ready to believe that there could be a great love between an engine and her engineer.

During the early afternoon they were on the oldest part of the road, which had lived a precarious existence on its local business. After an hour of straight track and curves over a more lonely portion of the road, she felt her air brakes as they slowed up to the station. Here the tall, heavy man came forward and climbed into her cab. Stepping to the engineer she heard the "Old Man" say:

"Why not go back, William, and get something to eat—you must be getting hungry."

As William gave him a questioning look, he said, "Yes, I told them back there to look after you. Take your time, for a little good food might not be out of place, as what I've had out here is nothing to boast of."

Noting the still questioning expression on the engineer's face, he continued,

"I'll run your engine for a while if your fireman over there

will give me the steam. Possibly I'll not do as good a job as you have, but I'll promise to keep on the track."

Pushing the hesitating engineer aside, the General Manager settled himself on the right-hand seat, pulled his soft hat down, and a moment after her engineer had left, there was a sudden pressure of steam that made it difficult for the 17 to start her train without a jerk. While admitting her new man lacked the sureness of her William, there was a sympathetic feeling in the way he handled her air. No, she had not been mistaken, her General Manager was a real railroad man, and seemed to know all about engines and everything concerning a railroad. She knew how important it was that he be well posted, for there were so few officials on the road, that it was necessary for him at times to be prepared to advise or do other men's work.

Was it because of the poor track, the speed, or his—she hated to say it—his lack of experience, that made them roll around more than before? Well, she'd give him all the help she could, for she had already developed a liking for this big kindly man.

The 17 approved of her private car, and it pleased her to think of her William back there getting a good meal. She had discovered by now that men were in a way like engines. Unless they had wholesome food, the way an engine had to have good fuel, they were never able to deliver their best.

Out in the observation room of the 99, the Chief engineer sat on one side of the car, while the President sat on the other side, both watching the track and the right of way. The Chief spoke occasionally, and was always prepared to answer questions. After a long pause the executive spoke.

"Going to take some time, isn't it, Captain, for this track to get in shape?"

"Yes, quite a time, General. You know we've not had an over abundance of money to keep up this end of the road, and we've handled a considerable amount of freight, considering its condition and the time she's been built."

A little later he was asked, "Are you getting on all right out East? Having your usual trouble in getting the proper foundation for your fills?"

Then they both entered into a long discussion as to material, the speed they were making with their construction, and the many things that have to be discussed and arranged for in any new enterprise. Occasionally the President stopped, to hazard the remark that he trusted their engineer was getting a full meal and might soon be through, for from the way their General Manager was whipping them around, he must be anxious to get on and see the new part of the line. There was certainly an air of relief when the train stopped at a siding and their operating official came back to their car.

"Well," said the President, "possibly and probably you do know about railroads and their operation. Yes, I imagine you must, for I was told you did before I brought you up here. Yet, without any ill intentions, I might intimate," as he looked at the other official, "I know other engineers that I'd rather ride behind."

"Well, General," was the answer, "if you'd given me more money to spend on the track you wouldn't be in a position to object to the way in which I handled your new engine."

"Possibly you may be right; for I've known you to be. But more to the point—how does she handle?"

"Probably as well as you could expect any new engine to. Yes, in fact better than I expected she would. I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what your new power is all right."

The President, getting to his feet as the car rolled about, stood holding to the open door as he answered:

"Still peeved are you, that I secured exactly what you needed?"

"No, General, I'm not, but I cannot understand how you knew what we needed."

"Well, Overman, there are probably a great many things in this complex life that few of us understand. Yes, a great many. For instance, I might mention the large number of lumber mills

that are running full blast, and a perfectly good road prepared to handle their business. Now the question is why the road should not do more business. Can you solve the problem for us, Captain?" turning to him.

His manager, not giving the Captain an opportunity to answer, replied, "If you will give us time and more money for the road, and" with a trace of annoyance in his voice, "a freight department to get business with, you'll be surprised at what we can do."

"Still remembering that old friend of mine, are you?" asked the General, "and still irritated that I gave a job to that son of an old friend of mine," adding with a smile, "to help you out."

"But, General, he knows nothing about getting freight."

His superior turned on him. "Well, it's time a man his age did. The father was a good man, and there is no reason why the son should not be too, if you'll only give him a proper chance. As you probably agree with me, I'm going to leave you two to do a little work, but before going, ABO," calling the Manager by his initials, "I'd like to say I like the looks of that young man you have running the engine. Unlike some of your friends, he looks as if he amounts to something. Where did you pick him up?"

"He's the man I was telling you about—maybe his father was a good man, but confidentially, neither of them ever voted for you or ran a post office in southern Minnesota."

"Might have been better for him if he had. I intend to talk to that young man." Turning, he walked off.

When he had gone the Captain turned to the Manager. "You and the General never seem to agree. Always fighting and disagreeing about something."

"Oh, that's just his way. He formerly scared me to death; now that I'm beginning to know him, I've discovered that there are a great many things about him that people do not understand. Even with his great dignity he is able to sit down and become at once the best of friends with all sorts of people."

After a pause he continued, "Guess we'd better stop over

at Rhinelander tonight to give the General a good night's sleep. After he has seen what has been accomplished we will run out to the end of the line tomorrow, if that's agreeable to you."

That night the Captain sent a telegram from Rhinelander to his head out on construction: "The President will be out tomorrow." The man receiving it, fully appreciating its contents, had everything spick and span next morning.

When the sun came up the 17 could see that the road was built on out east of the town. It was decidedly more like a town than any of the other stations, for it had side tracks, on which were cars of construction material, steel and lumber and great piles of ties. She hoped and believed her President would be satisfied when he arose in the morning to see a full train of loaded lumber cars, just in from off the road.

Still studying the place, she asked herself just what was the meaning of that connecting track that led off to another railroad. What road was it, and what right had it coming up here into their own country to take their business? She began to appreciate how some of the boxcars that she had met felt when they had spoken of competing roads. This one must have hauled all those rails up here. Well, they wouldn't do her much good, for the minute her road got their track into the Twin Cities, they'd keep that business, and it would be hauled by Baldwins, too. She depended on her President to attend to that.

As her tender was being filled with wood and water, she became anxious to be on her way, and learn for herself how much the Captain had accomplished. She did not have to wait long for her engineer soon appeared, gave her a good looking over, and started off at once. Peculiar too, for she had just noticed the first whiff from the kitchen stove back in the 99. Probably they were all going to have breakfast on the car. It would be nice to be off with her engineer and a new fireman, for they had dropped Ole on the way. Did her William know that she felt rather stiff, and would he know what to do to get that tired, rough feeling out of her bearings? Someone must

have told him, for he squirted oil in where she knew she needed it, and in other places that she knew nothing of.

It was nice and cool, and the new road running off east seemed like a country highway, for in places the great trees almost met overhead. There was a smell of pine and a green fragrance in the air as they silently moved on deeper and deeper into the woods. She wondered how it would be in the winter time when all was cold and the snow covered everything. Not so nice then, but winter, she had been told, was a long way off, and perhaps when it came she might be running out of Minneapolis, where she would have a more comfortable round-house, and where better care would be taken of her. It made her shiver to think of a long, cold winter in that brown shed building back at Turtle Lake.

The track became rougher and rougher; what was the matter, was she going to have that spring trouble she had heard mentioned back in Philadelphia? As they went on William began to run slower and slower. She was suddenly horrified to discover that there was no dirt between the ties, and at one or two places she was positive they were slipping sideways.

No, it was not safe to go on. She'd give a lurch in a minute or so, when she came to a low spot, that would advise her driver that he'd better slow down, or better still, stop. Waiting for the right spot she gave a hard pitch. In fact, she dropped so hard on her springs that she was frightened herself. It had the proper effect, for soon a black face came poking into the cab. Looking pale and excited it said,

"Mr. Engineer, the General man, he told me to tell you—yes, the General Manager and that Captain man said, too——"

"Well, what did they say?" her engineer demanded.

"Nothing much, Mr. Engineer, but they sort of thought it might be kinder nice for me to come crawling up here and sort of intermate that maybe you were running sort of fast. Kinder said you better slow down a bit."

"Said all that, did they?"

"They talked considerable, and kind of pointed like, when I removed myself, Mr. Engineer. And when you went slopping

that hot coffee right down Mr. President's clean vest, he all redded up and says to the General Manager,

"What kind of an engineer have we?" and to the Captain man, 'I'd rather hoped to find this track in better shape.'

"So then each one of them gentlemen said, 'You, Joe, you go right up ahead and tell that engineer—', but as each and every one of them told me something else to tell you, I'm jest saying, Mister, that if I were driving this machine, I sho' would be a little more keerful about some of these here low jint.

"Whew!" as they bumped over one lower than the rest. "Oh, Lord, ain't I glad I be here 'stead of back there. The General was eating an egg when I left, and if that egg goes a spreading herself on his clean white vest, he's sure going to say something dreadful to both of them men. Like as not you too, Mister Engineer, when he sees you."

It was an hour or so later that they passed a construction train on a new rough siding, and saw, a few minutes later, smoke off over the trees, telling them that they were near the track-laying train out at the end of the track. There the 17 met the No. 5, an engine like herself, only a trifle smaller. She gave the older engine a call as she went by to show that she did not feel superior to those old workers that had been building the road.

Now they crawled along over the unfinished track until they were within a few feet of the train of flat cars ahead of them. Here they stopped, and her three officials walked up beside her. The General Manager grinned as he looked at the engineer, the Captain hurried off to one of his men who was coming back to meet him, while the General came to a full stop. Yes, he had an egg spot on his shirt. Oh, how she hoped that he was not going to say something harsh to her engineer.

He looked up with a "Good morning, Mr. Engineer. You must have done some fast running back in Vermont."

"Yes, General, perhaps we did at times, when we understood that our President was in a hurry."

As there appeared little more to be said, the General

turned, and she heard him ask the Manager: "From what part of Vermont did your engineer come?"

He answered, "I've never asked him, but will make it my business to learn about him and his family."

"That will not be necessary. I'll ask him myself. When I was in Washington I knew a number of Vermont men." Then, abruptly changing the subject: "What are you going to do when you use up those ten cars of rails I saw back in Rhinelander?"

Perhaps the large mosquito that had summoned up his courage to secure first hand knowledge of this white man's blood was responsible, when the President said: "It would be a very agreeable performance to stop laying track this fine summer weather simply because your rails gave out."

As the 17 came to a stop behind the construction train, she delighted in the way the work was being handled. Gangs were seizing the ties from the cars and carrying them on to the workers, while a line of men with rail tongs hurried the steel to the front, to drop it on the already placed ties. As each rail was set end to end, men almost threw the angle bars in position and had the bolts in and tightened when the next piece of steel hove in sight.

All moved like a great machine, and the men clicked as if they were a part. The General watching as if in a trance, was awakened by more ferocious and fearless insects which settled on his neck. While smashing at them, he commented:

"You certainly have those men trained, Captain. They move like clock-work. Only be sure you keep the clock wound up."

The 17 learned from hearsay that after her party had ridden in springless wagons for a way, they had walked far out ahead, and had lunched in one of the engineer camps, where the General had talked to everyone and had even tried his hand in drawing out a silent red man who had just returned from the front.

"Yes, me carried supply."

Did the mosquitoes bite him?

"They no like me."

Did they feed him well?

"Not bad."

Giving it up the seeker of information turned to various details, asking to know this and that, and then going on, requested the reason for the said this and that. Finally, furnished with a mosquito net that one of the men produced, he half squatted on an empty tomato box, and did not look half so severe and dignified as when he was in his usual surroundings. It was these trips which brought him nearer to the men, and explained his understanding of their lives, cares and burdens. While they were half afraid of him at times, he made them feel he was really one of them, for he had once been a farm boy who knew what hard work was.

While her officials were off inspecting, the 17 had run back to the last division point, had turned herself, and now awaited her party half a mile nearer the front than when they had tramped off in the morning. When all were again on board, she gave a low whistle and pointed her pilot into the dark west. On they went, slowly at first over the new track, then faster as they hit the somewhat settled roadway. It was a night she was long to remember.

The moon came up late, to throw great shadows across the track, that looked like great fallen trees. When they rushed into the half moonlit cuts she felt sure that the sides had caved or slipped in. Once a tall pine had so shadowed a trestle that it appeared as if several ties were missing, and if it had not been for the sureness of her driver, she would have preferred to draw off on a siding and remain until light made it safer going. The run as a whole was not bad, for the cool air blowing through the trees, and the quiet of the night gave her a joyful doing spirit.

When they pulled up at Turtle Lake, she went around her train, switched her private car, and set it over on the Omaha connection. No one was around when her William took her back and carefully slipped her into the little flat round-house.

She was not sure, but it seemed as if he told her in that dark place that she was all right, and that he was proud of her.

Early in the morning she heard a rumble, a click, and another rumble. They had gone; yes, her officials were now on their way home. She was sorry. For she liked them all, and it seemed as if everything were more alive when they were around. It certainly had been interesting to hear them talk about what was going on, and about what they intended to do. As she napped off she sorrowed a bit that she would probably not see them again for a long, long time. Then, likely the 18 or 23 would be out, and one of them might run their special trains. Yes, probably they would if she was to go into passenger service.

The last thought she had was, "I hope 20 does not get them, for if she does, she'll try to show off and get us all into trouble. If the Captain or Manager knew her as well as I do, they would put her on either a freight or gravel train where she belongs."

CHAPTER XIII

"THE 9" COMES THROUGH

BEFORE the trees had begun to turn, the word drifted over the line that the construction work from Minneapolis out was forging ahead in a most agreeable manner. Some went so far as to prophesy that the line would be completed from the Twin Cities to Canada before the snow fell.

For some unexplained reason the new 22 came to them in a roundabout way from the eastern end. She had of course a great deal to say about what was going on there, how the great Canadian road was reaching down from its main line, and that the great International bridge was to be completed by the time their own road had completed its new through eastern line from the Mississippi.

Many nights when these sister Baldwins stood side by side on the side track, they told many wondrous stories: the 22 of how she had met the 24, who reported that the last of their class, with some of their oldest sisters, were helping on the track that was pushing out from the Mill City. She questioned the 17 as to what she thought of this new corduroy road construction they were using to build through the soft places, or whether she had heard nothing about it as yet. Of course the 17 had. Didn't they have corduroy road on their part of the line, and weren't they the first to try it out? She'd heard all about why the Captain did it, too. How at first he had tried to pile his dirt or fills on the soft ground, only to have it sink down in the muck, or go slipping off to the side. Then the capable and ingenious Captain had made a road of huge logs, and put his fills on them. She had found it, as had the other engines, rather a nervous business to run over it at first, but now

that they were accustomed to it, they all rather liked the soft feeling under their wheels.

How well it was going to stand up remained to be seen. She had heard how the ice and frost heaved it in the winter, so she said in a knowing way:

"Don't you think, 22, the tracks are going to heave badly when the frost gets into the ground?"

The other engine answered, as she puffed out the smoke that had been occasioned by a wet stick in her fire box:

"Heave! I'd say she'd heave, but out our way last winter they put enough shims or thin pieces of hard wood under the rail so it was not too bad. They said, that is, the Captain did, that he thought when the sun got into those low places it would dry them out so that eventually we'll have a fine track."

As the 22 was running a freight, and the 17 a passenger, the two engines saw a great deal of each other, and were most companionable. As both had seen hard service, neither could call attention to the other's looks. Both wondered what their work would be when the line was completed. The 22 spoke of her tires, and said they were getting so cut she was becoming anxious as to how she was going to keep on the rails. They heard of various trips their officials had made to other parts of the line. Once the 17 had the pleasure of taking the 99 out, but as it was a night trip both going and coming, she did not get the same satisfaction out of it as she had before.

One night on coming in from her run, she found a stranger at the round-house. It was the 20, who, having come up from Minneapolis on the Omaha, had a great deal to say. She looked much fresher and nicer than either the 17 or 22, saying it was understood that they had been keeping her in condition to put on a through passenger train from Minneapolis to the east.

"Then of course with my new round-house, and the shops that are being built, the road is in much better shape to take care of me. There's a very peculiar man down there they call the Master Mechanic, and the way he looks after you is a joy.

Yet he's kind of peculiar, for he seems to have a fondness for some engines, and is much nicer to them than to the others."

"Were you one of his favorites?" asked the 22.

"I may have been," answered the 20, "but he wasn't as nice to me as he was to the 23."

"And why was that?" asked the 17.

"Oh, I imagine it's his way, and he never knew me so well." Then subrosa, or confidentially, "He was very much provoked when I derailed out in front of his office. Said there was not the slightest excuse for it."

Then the 20, forgetting herself, added, "He was very ugly and said to the shop foreman who was with him he guessed that the 20 was one of those contrary ones that always came with a batch of engines; that he better look me over and see what was the trouble. Well, I was taken into the new shops, and after going all over me, they could find nothing wrong. I heard them talking about it afterwards. The Master Mechanic said he never had supposed there was. Then he insulted me. Told the yard master that if he wanted an engine to switch with he could have me, so I've switched so much I'm tired to death."

"And did anyone else mistreat you?" asked the 17.

"Guess you don't know what switching is, if you ask about trouble and mistreatment. Trouble! There was nothing but trouble. How can anyone expect an eight wheeler not to have trouble with such a job? The Master Mechanic got mad every time I threw my front truck off. In fact he became so intolerant and annoyed that he came out, got into my cab and ran me out of the round-house, and the first thing I knew I was freshly painted and on my way up here. Shows, doesn't it, that it's hardly worth your while to try and do your work. If I'd had good engineers that knew their jobs, I'd have done as well as the rest of you. But up here they are sure to appreciate me, and I suppose they will give me your passenger run, 17, and put you on the ballast work. And I'll say that's a nasty job too, in hot weather, with all the dust and dirt flying about."

"Tried that too, did you, 20?"

"Oh, yes, for a time."

"And what happened that they did not keep you on it?"

"Nothing, except that my careless engineer bumped me into a freight train, smashed my pilot and headlight, and bruised up my tender."

"What did your friend the Master Mechanic say when you came back?" asked the 22, as she grinned at the 17.

"I'd rather not repeat what he said. It was then he put me to switching."

"It would seem that you have rather changed your mind since you began speaking of the Master Mechanic," replied the 17.

"Yes, it's good policy for an engine to speak well of the man she works for. You'll find that unless you do, that you'll never get the best runs."

Evidently having talked herself out, she quieted down, until she heard the other two engines discussing some of the passenger cars they had to handle. Then she broke in with:

"You just ought to see some of the new cars that we're getting. They are fine, I'll tell you. Same color outside as those you have up here, but nicer, and if you won't tell, I'll mention something I heard the General tell the General Manager. He says he's going to put on a through train in the Soo next summer, and it's to have a sleeping car. What do you think of that? I'm going to feel pretty fine when I get a train like that behind me."

"How do you know that you'll get it?" asked the 22. "It would seem that you did not make yourself very popular down where you came from."

"No, maybe I didn't, but they're going to have an assistant Master Mechanic on the east end of the line." Then, "Just between ourselves, I know who he's going to be, and I've pulled some strings, so I'm sure to go with him. I'm not the kind of engine that does not keep her eyes open. I'm awake, I am, so when he ran me one day, I showed him what I could do. Pleased him, too."

"How do you know you pleased him?"

"How? Because I've heard him say to some of those around the round-house that I was a misunderstood engine; that if I were properly handled I'd be better than the rest of you." Then, with a sly glance, "I see to it that I get into no trouble when he's around. Well, 17, as I shall probably go out on your passenger train tomorrow, I'd better be getting some sleep."

In the morning when their banked fires began to come up, the 17 looked at the 22 and the 22 looked at the 17, as one said to the other: "I notice that our nice sister 20 has left us."

"Yes, I saw her start off early this morning on the dirt train. Quite fortunate that she should have this opportunity to show her worth. Too bad, 17, that you're going to lose your passenger train."

"Yes, isn't it? But between ourselves I wish she'd run off a bridge. I know just the one for her, too."

"Same here," answered the 22, "only I wish that she were not a Baldwin. Yet with our large family, I don't suppose we can expect all of them to be what we'd like to have them."

The other engine responded with a sigh, "Yes, and I imagine we'll have to sort of look after her all our lives."

"Yes, suppose we will, and while it will be hard, we shall have to help her whenever we can. But I'd say from the way she has started that we'll have to do a goodly portion of her work before we get through."

The 22 responded in a feeling voice, "While it's possible that it's not a nice thing to say, sister, I hope she'll get so smashed up in a wreck some day that they'll rebuild her, and that may make a difference."

"Let's hope it will," answered the 17, "but I heard back in Philadelphia, that once a bad engine, always a bad engine. That needn't worry us, for I've heard our head man say that we were both all right, and are giving good service, and from what the 20 said, I'm inclined to believe that the Master Mechanic down in Minneapolis will approve of us when we are sent down there."

The rest of the summer was such a busy one that both of these engines were almost run off their wheels. Many times the 17 was taken off her train to handle a special or extra trains. One memorable day, when the leaves were turning, and before the snow came, the 22 went off to work west. She must have been very busy, for she seldom ran in even for the night, and the few times she did come, she hurried right off again in the morning, hardly waiting to be washed out.

The 17 had been moved off to the first division east, so the two of them had not seen each other for months. Owing to the lumber that was being rushed to Iowa via the Omaha, the 17 one morning was hurried back over her old well known district, and had an opportunity to look over her old quarters, while waiting to take a train east.

As she had not as yet been turned, she faced the west. Tired from her long, strenuous summer, it was more than likely she was taking a cat nap, when an unusual excitement about the place caused her to look up in a sleepy way. What was that 'way off west? In a way it looked like the smoke of a locomotive. Now fully awake, she began to become excited herself. Perhaps it was the 22. It would be nice to see her old friend again. But why should everyone go on so about the 22?

As she wondered, an extra engineer jumped into her cab and began to blow her whistle. Was the man crazy; didn't he know she was not going out for several hours, and why did the idiot keep her whistle open all the time? Then remembering her William she thought,

"What a waste of steam! This excessive whistling always makes me nervous, too."

She looked up sharply. Something of importance must indeed have happened, for now the little 1 and 2 had joined in. Was the town on fire? If so, why didn't they move her? Didn't they appreciate the fact that she had too much hard work ahead of her to take any chances with fire? Now the 19, that had been working on that part of the road, joined in.

As she knew positively there was no fire, she wondered what all this childishness meant? Why couldn't that man drop her whistle cord? It was getting unbearable, for while he operated her whistle with one hand he began ringing her bell with the other. Why didn't her William come and rescue her. Yes, there he came, and to her great annoyance, he seemed to have gone wild like the rest, as he rushed up the track. Disgustedly she turned and glanced off beyond. Yes, there was that smoke, only nearer. She knew from the type of puff that it was not made by her friend the 22. Probably it was some other engine. Perhaps the wretched 20 was cutting up.

As the other engine drew closer, she suddenly appreciated what it was all about. Gathering every ounce of steam she had, she let go a welcome to the No. 9, for now she knew that this stranger had come up all the way from Minneapolis on their own rails, and that the new outlet from the West to the East had been completed.

CHAPTER XIV

WINTER

THE winter was long and hard, especially on the locomotives. Through freight began to move as soon as the line was completed, and long trains of flour were on the road marked "rush." The 17, like all the rest, was run day and night. It was no longer a question of having your own engineer, for an engine no sooner got in than she was turned around to go back, and those who had gone through the first construction days found it difficult to make steam, for they now needed a general overhauling. Some of her sisters had gone to the Shoreham Shops, as they were called. Mechanics went over them as doctors do patients, picking out the engines that needed shopping the most.

She was out in the woods with a long freight train when the first snow came. It seemed rather nice at the start, when the small flakes began to fall and melt on her boiler. Yet it did make her messy, as they melted into dirty cold water that the wind slopped against her. As the ground whitened the rails became too slippery for enjoyment and where the wind could get a straight blow, it gathered in masses of snow to pile up in great drifts in every cut. At first it was sport to go smashing into it and feel her pilot brush it aside. But as the drifts became more frequent and deeper, the fun of the thing diminished. They had lost time, and were losing still more as the storm raged through the woods. If she could only set off four or five of those heavy flour cars, she knew she could make better headway.

Her men must have felt the same, for during the night an agent came out of his cold, forlorn little station into the storm, waving a red, blinking lantern, as he passed up a message to

the engineer. The conductor, who was in the cab warming himself, looked it over and guessed they'd better, so leaving her caboose on the main line, they forced the last five cars through the drifts back on the siding. Then she backed up, coupled on to the caboose again, and as she was ready to start, heard her engineer say:

"I'll need water soon," and the conductor's answer:

"Well, there's nothing to do but go on and get as far as we can, for the snow is now too deep to back through."

She lost the rest of his reply as she plunged into a greater drift than any that had come before. The snow was now so deep over the rails that it made the going still worse. The wind shrieked as it sought and drove the snow through every crack in her cab, and with that which blew in from the back of the cab, settled on the hot boiler and turned into a foggy steam that made it impossible to see.

The engineer had long before closed his window and tightened the bolt that held it in place. Now she was throwing herself into the storm and darkness, unable to see or know what might be ahead. Every bank of snow reached up to grip and shake her as if some evil spirit in the storm raged and sought to tear her apart. Once she felt a soft thud, and through a lift in the storm saw a torn and broken stag thrown off into the woods.

But she had little time to think of such things now, as she asked herself how much further they could struggle on. She knew her wood was getting low and her boiler kept complaining, as her tank told it there was little water left and that it was going fast. She appreciated the fact that if it went too low that they would all blow up. Oh, how she prayed that her engineer and fireman were watching her water glass and would stop in time. Still, on they ploughed into the increasing storm. The wind twisted at the great pines that bent and lamented as they showed their determination to face out any wind that might break their limbs, but could not uproot and hurl them to the ground.

The 17 watched, as they strained before the storm. She gasped. What would happen if one of those monsters had fallen, or should fall across the track? How did her engineer know what was ahead, and if he did, how could he stop her on this slippery rail? She knew nothing on earth could stop them from crashing against it, to be thrown from the track and go crashing off, to be torn by the ugly ragged stumps that strewn the right of way. If not that, perhaps to go plunging off some trestle or bridge into the dark slate-colored water. Oh, why could the wind not stop, and let them get out of the winter inferno.

She had ceased to think of the round-house as that small, dirty slab building, and now regarded it as a haven of rest. How she wished, as the clutching, twisting wind tore at her, that she might be back there talking to the 22. However, there was nothing to do but to go on as far as possible, trusting that they might drive through.

Suddenly her steam was shut off, her brakes were applied, and she came to a stop. The wind, glorying in the white torment it had aroused, seemed determined to complete its work as it piled great drifts about her and the train. The brakeman and the conductor came floundering through the storm. She heard the conductor order the brakeman to throw snow into her tank.

"It will take a lot to give her water, but unless she gets it, we're done for."

He yelled to the engineer that they were about half a mile from a big pile of cord wood, asking him if he could make it.

He in turn shouted above the wind: "Hang on, and I'll try."

He gave her steam and her wheels whistled around, unable to get a hold on the track. Shutting it off, he reversed her great bar, and with another spurt of steam, drove her back a few feet. Again throwing the bar, he sent her with a jump into the drift that had formed ahead. Then back once more,

this time far enough to give her a running plunge into the white misery that lay ahead. The storm, as if feeling it had been worsted in the struggle, gathered strength and viciousness, as it whirled and came tearing down the track, now bearing in its white cruel arms pieces of limbs and small trees, that it sent crashing against her headlight and windows.

As determined as her crew, the 17 threw her entire might against this new attack, to go plunging and tearing through the drifts, out to a wind-cleared piece of track, and on through another smother of snow as if she were a demented thing. Off in front for a single instant she saw the great pile of wood. Why didn't her engineer see it too? Yet how could he, all closed in his cab of fog, lit only when the fire door was opened.

At a tug on the long rope that ran out behind to the caboose, he closed the throttle and the worn out but still determined engine came to another stop. While one man crawled up on her tender and began to shovel snow, the rest of the crew plunged back and forth as they carried great sticks of oak and maple that she must have if they were to go on. Finally, worn out, but with enough fuel to go on with, the entire crew piled into the cab to hold their cold, blue-red hands almost against the hot boiler. As great chunks of wood were thrown into her fire pot and the hot steam was turned onto the snow, the 17 felt her steam as it formed and struggled through the water up into her steam dome, and how she gloried as it hurried down to her cylinders.

Again came that tortuous backing and going ahead, until with a bound she burst through her snow binding. But this was not to be the last time, for all during the night this thing of iron and steel fought the elements, and when the storm blew itself out as the sun came up over this new, clean, white world, the 17, with her men and her train, came plowing her way through the lighter snow into the small division point. Men came to the platform, demanding, as she slowed down, how she ever got through, for all the other trains were either hours late, or stalled out on the line.

The conductor said, "Ask the engineer, he can tell you," and the engineer said:

"Ask my 17, for she did it, and if she had not done what I supposed it impossible for any engine to do, we might now be stalled 'way back in the woods."

Some other man said, "Then she's not like the 20, for she lay down on us and would not steam, and finally jumped the track back at spur 10. They've gone out to get her." How relieved she was when the foreman of the round-house said to her engineer, "You'd better run your engine into the house and get a bit of sleep, while we get things cleaned up a bit."

She was a proud 17 as she nosed her way in with the other engines, thinking all the while, "It's well worth while to try."

So it went all through the cold winter. Part of the time she was on her passenger run, which she found interesting. When the lumber men, in their bright colored coats and shaggy caps first got on the trains, they were orderly enough as they settled down on the hard wooden seats of the cars that were fitted up for them. But as the night wore on, and the squat bottles passed from hand to hand and mouth to mouth, conditions brightened up a bit. For instance, when a Denny from one of the great cities took exception to what an Ole or Yon from the harvest fields might insinuate, then there would frequently ensue discussions that called for muscular prowess. Those from the Scandanavian peninsula quite naturally came to the support of their own, while those from the Emerald Isle supported with enthusiasm their own representative.

Knives or arms were seldom brought into action, for the combatants preferred to break off the back of a seat or use the maple or oak strips from the seats, either for assault or defense. As the argument developed and became of greater interest, an inoffensive wooden blind might hastily be removed from its guides, to be smashed over an inflamed head.

All went well as long as these cheerful passengers were willing to confine their attentions to their own car, for the railroad more or less expected rough action from these vigor-

ous red-blooded men, but exception was taken by the train crew when these paying guests displayed an outside interest, and wished to investigate the cars occupied by more sober passengers. Then it became desirable and quite necessary for the railroad men to object, and perhaps led by the conductor armed with a short pick handle, followed by his brakemen with like clubs or their own capable fists, order would be restored.

Then some of the combatants with bruised heads or new aches would quietly settle down for the night as the train went bumping on in the dark. If a real and lasting victory had not been won by the railroaders it would become necessary for them to seek the help of the baggage man, and other willing helpers who generally desired to be on the side of order and deportment. Then again the conductor would lead his assembled forces to the enemy's camp. The door of the car would be forced back on the defending lumbermen, a nice strong maple club swung by a sturdy arm would make a first break in their ranks, and then as other clubs and capable fists followed, the attacking chief with his column would victoriously advance, clearing the aisles as he went.

Possibly if some of the railroad force had been severely handled, the conductor would reach up, pull the bell cord, and as the 17 slowed down, a delegation of the most combative of the woodsmen would be quite firmly taken in hand, dragged through the field of battle to the platform of the car, and with sureness, deposited in some soft drift, as the train resumed speed.

This treatment usually had a beneficial and cooling effect, and for the rest of the trip there might be little said, except for an occasional argument as to the merits of the various camps, and the grub. On this ever entertaining subject there was a universal opinion concerning the merits of all camps. During the night brakemen would go back into the lumbermen's car, grab a sleeping worker by the coat, and advise him and his friends in good forcible English that theirs was the next station.

Little was thought of these battles except by those who did the necessary repair work on the bruised and battered cars. They regarded it indeed peculiar that the train men were unable to maintain proper order on their trains. However, they were somewhat hesitant about expressing their opinions to the forceful men who ran the trains, for they had been hired largely for the purpose of maintaining order, and could explain in their own strenuous way that their trains were not run for the convenience of rough men who came to the woods with the impression that it was neither desirable nor necessary for them to pay fares. At times a tramp with a coupling pin might wish to argue his rights, but as the railroad officials held a strong opinion that they had some interests and rights themselves, they hired men for their train crews who had stern mouths, and sturdy bodies.

Finally the short days of the winter lengthened, and the ever increasing warmth of the sun began to eat into the snow, and turn the drifts sodden and dirty. The dark, cold water of streams and rivers cut its way through the ice in a thousand places, as slabs of broken ice and released logs went smashing the banks to leave dark wounds, to be washed by the ever muddier water. Later, as the packed snow left the track, the ties dug themselves into the thawing road bed to jostle and twist the trains as they slowed over the worst spots. Here and there the open water of a lake could be seen through the trees, as its bluish purple color told the ducks that spring was here. The partridges began to pick around and the deer to nibble new green buds whose heads were loosening in the warming sun.

The rush of the winter business being over, every day or so an engine went west to be repaired. The 17, pounding along on her flat and cut wheels, hoped her time would soon come. Now she knew of worn grates, leaky flues, and all the other ailments a hard driven engine accumulates.

One night, knowing or caring little of what went on, she found herself at the head of a light freight on an unknown

portion of the road, and headed for the long needed overhauling. Later, those in the shop yards, hearing a whistle, looked up to see a worn, battered, dirty and forlorn engine with a light train, come sliding down the grade. Would anyone have guessed that this was the once trim, pretty creature that had, not so many months ago as time is counted, gone into the north to be the pride and joy of those who were thrusting the road on East?

CHAPTER XV

HOME

IT IS likely that the 17 felt the way a great many people do when they visit relatives for the first time. It was bad enough to come home tired and dirty, and humiliating to stand there in front of the station in broad daylight. She knew, that while they were pretending not to see her, several of her bright clean Baldwin sisters were looking her over; just the way some women take in at a glance an old-fashioned skirt, or a crumpled ill-fitting dress that a less prosperous friend might be wearing. It was hard to have her own family treat her in this cold, distant manner, but unbearable to have two Rhode Island switch engines sniffing off on a near siding. She knew they were discussing her, and heard the one built on a single frame; that is, without a tender, say:

"I should think that a road engine would have more pride than to come down here in the condition she is in. Just look at the broken glass in her cab windows. It may not be her fault, but between ourselves, I should think she might have kept herself cleaner."

"Yes," the other switcher answered, "it certainly is trying to have one of our engines in such shape. It would perhaps be excusable for us to become slightly soiled, for we seldom get away from the yards where outsiders see us, but for road engines that move about the country——." She gave a disgusted sniff. "I'd say it's perfectly disgraceful. What must people think of our road when they see such an engine as she is bearing our name."

The 17, who had heard certain gossip about the single-

framed switcher, was unable to contain herself, and curtly retorted,

"While I fail to see your number, Miss Rhode Island, I cannot help but note that you carry your tank on your engine frame, and possibly I'm justified in assuming that you are the engine that is continually getting off the track even in your switching service. And furthermore——"

She was interrupted by the single framer, who snapped back:

"I'd say, 17, that it's hardly proper for a slattern like you to comment on the members of the family you have come to visit, and I'd suggest that you at least wash your headlight."

All the other Baldwins about the terminal listened, for they were glad that an engine had turned up with enough spunk to express the opinions they held but had preferred not to express regarding the disagreeable jumper.

The newcomer, feeling this air of friendliness, gave two or three self-respecting puffs, and resumed:

"I have always made it a practice not to comment on any engine we may have on our road. As to my being a visitor, I might call your attention to the fact that I am far from that, for I was one of the first members of our large family to go to work.

"Naturally I am a trifle dirty and worn, not due to any lack of self-respect, but to the fact that I have been through a hard, tough winter handling the freight that has brought in the money to care for those of you who have never earned a dollar in your lives. We road engines appreciate the desirability of having switch engines to attend to such work as you do, for it relieves us of an unpleasant duty."

The 17, knowing that she now had the moral support of her family, continued: "And speaking of this annoying and disagreeable switching, it has always seemed to me as if the work might be done more economically and satisfactorily, if engines were secured that cared more for the rail than they did for the ties."

The switcher who had attacked what she supposed was a tired out, spiritless engine, opened her safety valve as she roared back:

"You nasty, dirty little thing! What do you mean talking to me in this way? I'd have you know that we Rhode Islands run this yard. As to track jumping, what about your 20? I suppose you are proud of her and the trouble she has occasioned, not only here but out on the road, where she has made even a worse record than she did here in our yard."

Now all the Baldwins listened in for they had feared that when the 17 spoke about track jumping the switcher would mention the 20. Now what answer could their sister make?

They waited while she gave a thoughtful puff or so, and heard her reply, as the other and larger switcher was about ready to break in:

"Inasmuch, Miss Rhode Island, as you have concluded to bring family matters into this discussion, I will repeat what I said before—that I am not accustomed to discuss our own engines. However, it is probable that some day in the near future you may be disposed of, possibly to some lumber company, so I will not demean myself enough to fittingly answer your unnecessary comments on members of my family."

One Baldwin whispered to another, "My, but our 17 is all right, isn't she? Now listen to her," as their sister continued.

"I do not suppose, Rhode Island, that there is an engine east of Minneapolis and probably west, too, that has not heard of your behavior, not only in this yard that you say you rule, but of the way you have acted when they have attempted to use you out on the road. Do not imagine that I am condemning your builders, for it would be impossible for me to do so conscientiously, for all know that the engines that came from your old Providence, Rhode Island, works have made wonderful records for themselves. And as for two nice, self-respecting, hard working engines, our own little 1 and 2 are hard to beat. I have visited and slept on the same sidings with them—yes, even doubled headed with both of them at times. One of the reasons



SO THIS WAS TO BE HER HOME



THE FIRST PASSENGER TRAIN FROM TURTLE LAKE

that I hated to leave my part of the road was that I would not see as much of them. Then take your large sister switcher here."

An angry voice answered: "You leave me out of it, Baldwin."

The 17, pretending not to hear, continued: "While I have not as yet had the pleasure of being introduced to the 321, I have heard many flattering remarks as to her ability. More than one of our road engines has spoken of the way she has kept this yard cleaned up, and all appreciate the great aid she has rendered them in getting their trains up the nearby grades. Furthermore, I've heard it rumored that the road is so pleased with her that some day they intend to buy more like her."

The 320, for that was the number of the objectionable switcher, was about to hurl back an answer, when the 321 spoke so that all might hear:

"I think if I were in your place, 320, I'd drop the subject, for the 17 is a fairminded and most intelligent locomotive."

The 320 snapped back: "You approve of her because she was complimentary." Sniffing, she went on, "I hope you do not believe all she said about the way you handle this yard. A nice fix things would be in about here if I were not doing more than my share of the work. Well, as I've got to switch her train, I must be going, but before I leave I'd like to tell you not to be a big enough fool to believe all you hear."

In a few minutes the 17 felt a great jolt as the angry switcher coupled on to her caboose and train, which she grumblingly switched off to another part of the yard.

The strange engineer who had handled her roughly all the way from Turtle Lake was evidently familiar with the yards, for without interest he watched the switches and swinging arms until he brought her to the turntable outside of the large red brick round-house. As the table turned, the 17 caught sight of a number of her family engines. What a cordial time she was going to have.

After she had been turned, her engineer got down and

walked off as if he had no interest in her or any engine that looked the way she did. He did speak to a man, who gave her one scornful look as he ran her, not into the house, but back on a track that was filled with engines in her same condition. There was the 21, looking even worse than she did herself, and other Baldwins that looked differently in their diamond stacks. These had a different name on their tenders. They too, looked shabby and disreputable. Under the dust and dirt she did manage to spell out "Minneapolis and Pacific." Now just who were they, and why were they here?

The disreputable 21 was glad to see her, and gossiped as to where she had been and what she had been doing. She said she had been out on the M. and P. laying track. It had not been nice work either, out on that cold prairie in the winter. The 17 asked her why she was off on a strange road when she knew they had so much to do on their own line.

The other mumbled in a tired voice: "Well, you must have been in the woods, all right. Don't you know that we have over two hundred miles of track west of here? Strange road!" she repeated, "The M. and P. belongs to us."

"I didn't know that. How did we happen, 21, to build out that way? I've always considered ourselves a flour road built to save the flour mills. I should think from what I've been through that there was enough work to do without poking out on the cold prairies. I hope I shall never have to run out that way."

A sour voice came from the diamond stack on the next track. "You don't hope it any more than I do that they never send me up where there is nothing but woods, and I'm told, one can hardly see a headlight's distance at that. We've got a railroad; not one floated on dead logs the way you have back East."

"But the logs weren't dead," answered the 17.

"Well, they might have been for all you know. If they weren't, it won't be long before they begin to rot. Then you and your trains will sink down in the mud." With a sigh, "I

hope they won't send us diamond stackers out in your woods to dig you out—as if we were mud hens.”

The annoyed 17 snapped back, “It will be a long, long time before you do that mud hen act you speak of. Even if our track were to go down a bit I don't know how you could be of any help to us.”

“And why not?” demanded the wearer of the diamond.

“For the simple reason that we have to earn the money to keep you in coal.”

“Maybe so,” answered the other, “But if it were not for us out on the west end, it's more than likely that if it was not for the grain we hauled you would not earn enough to care for yourselves, to say nothing of us.”

“How so?” asked the flour hauling engine.

“How so,” repeated the diamond. “I'll tell you how so. If it were not for us, the flour mills at Minneapolis would have been driven out of business, and then where would you eastern engines be if you did not have your great flour trains. Put that in your stack and smoke it.”

She was getting another draft to go on when a worn voice from the 21 broke in:

“If I were in the place of either of you tired engines, I believe I would not get discussing our road and our family affairs until rested. From the way you have been going at one another I'd say one or both of you will say something that you will be sorry for afterwards. It never pays to argue on a cold furnace, especially when you are fatigued and feel disagreeable.”

“I'm not disagreeable, nor irritable as you intimate, 21.”

“Neither am I,” said the 17. “Now as I was saying to that diamond stack——”

“Won't you say it some other time?” requested the 21. “Some time when I'm not about? It might do you both good to remember that you are both Baldwins.”

“You're not a Baldwin, are you?” demanded the M. and P. engine.

"Of course I am," answered the engine from the East. That was why I felt so badly to have you speak to me as you did." Her voice quivering slightly, as she added, "I must admit that I was considerably surprised, to say nothing of being grieved at the reception I have received. It might not have been so bad if I had been here for some time, but to have someone speak to me the way you did the minute I let out my fire—and from a Baldwin, it hit me pretty hard."

"Oh, I wasn't meaning all I said," replied the diamond stack. "I'm tired, as the 21 said, and irritable, too. That alkali water we get out on the prairies gives you awful boiler ailments. Now I'm just caked up with scale in my insides, and hardly accountable for what I say."

"That's all right," answered the 17. "I'm almost as sick as you are. We've put in a dreadful winter."

Then both engines talked about their ailments like two old women, while the 21 nodded off to sleep as her fire died down.

Before the first two had given all their symptoms, a small engine came breezing in. The 17, giving her one look, said:

"Isn't she an exquisite thing: and named after our President? A Baldwin, too. Oh, 42, where does she run, and is she as nice as she looks?"

"Yes, she's very nice, and we are all proud of her and her class. Yet some of us think at times they are a bit too proud of their straight red stacks, their red wheels, and all the brass trimmings they wear. Yet we all admit that for their weight and small cylinders they are little wonders. I have heard that when our President went to the builders to buy us he told them to turn out five of the best small engines they could. Perhaps some of us plainer engines may be a trifle jealous of those red stacks. But on the whole I do believe I'd rather have my comfortable diamond. Why worry about stacks, for ours smoke all right. Anyway, it's been said that some day we forties are to have our front ends extended, and have straight backs."

As she glanced at the 17, she added, "I'd say that all they need do with you is to unbolt your balloon and bolt on the

latest thing in stacks, such as I understand we are all to have. Now I wonder what's up, for here comes our Master Mechanic."

"Is he considerate and knowing?" asked the 17.

"Most considerate. I'm told that what he doesn't know about engines isn't worth knowing," answered the 42. "Guess he must be coming to look you over, for he went all over me yesterday. Afterwards I heard him say to his assistant that as they are worse off for power out East it might be advisable to get after the 17 the minute she comes, for she's been out longer than any of the other standards."

The western engine was correct, for the tall man went over the 17 from her pilot to the backcoupling casting. Then, climbing up in her cab, he settled down in a restful pose as he ran his eyes over her various valves and gauges. She thought she heard him say,

"You've been through a whole lot, haven't you, old girl? Had some pretty hard handling, too."

Then he seemed to ponder as his hand seemed almost to caress her throttle lever. She could not help but wonder why he was so kind to a dirty, tired and worn engine. Maybe just because he was made that way. Perhaps he was one that had once loved an engine that had been taken from him. But from the way she had been pounded over the road, she had her own ideas as to the truth of such romances. However, if such romance did happen, it would not be difficult to think of this kindly man in the engineer's part.

Finally he got down from the seat, and as he gave her another look, she was quite positive that he said, when he reached the ground:

"While we've got a lot of work to do on you, lady, you are worth all the time and trouble we're going to give you."

Before leaving, he called a man and said to him: "Better put her in the shop at once. I'll be out before long to go over her more thoroughly."

Soon the disagreeable 321 came up, and after giving her a

kick as she coupled on, bumped her around over the roughest part of the yard, and finally set her on the track outside of the erecting shop. She was soon established on a track where she could look out and get some ideas as to what was going on.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SHOPS

AILING locomotives regard the shops in the same light that people do the hospitals. A man with a severe ache down on his right side may try to persuade himself that his trouble is just a bad attack of indigestion, and that he will be all right in a few days, knowing all the time that an objectionable appendix should be removed. An engine may have something of the same kind of pain, and know that there is something desperately wrong with her crown sheet or mud ring, but like the human, she endeavors to forget, and to convince herself that there is nothing seriously wrong. The man is probably relieved when the soft fingered doctor discovers the tender spot and orders him to the hospital. It's the same with the engine, when a specialist, tapping around with a small hammer, finds a thin sheet, and determines that the shop is the place for her. Both drag themselves off, knowing it's all for the best, but fearing the worst. Each has a certain feeling of comfort as he is wheeled off to his own room or track, and finds the first night, instead of being one of dread and despair as was fully expected, is one of quiet and repose.

So it was with the 17, for she was set in as the men were leaving the shop, and after her months of turmoil on the road, the place seemed a haven of rest. She was so tired that the low voices of the patient engines almost lulled her to sleep, and she knew nothing more until the great shop whistle blew its hoarse notice to tell the workers that it was time for them to finish their breakfasts and get started to work. It was not long before the men began to straggle in, first one or two at a time, and then more in bunches, as they talked to each other of their

home and shop affairs. Inside, they scattered to their places, to change from their street to their work clothes, as they suggested and advised with each other as to cylinders, air pumps or other jobs they were either on or about to undertake. All were ready when the whistle again blew telling them to get to work.

The shafting overhead began to turn, and the great reaching belts from the pulleys above gave energy to the heavy shop machines resting on their stone foundations.

The 17 had always thought her first small round-house was a noisy place when they hammered and repaired boilers, but it was quiet and restful compared to these shops when all got under way. The din and noise were something terrific. This was certainly no place for a tired engine with worn nerves, but like the man in the hospital, she was there to be repaired, and there was nothing to do but make the best of it. Yet she did wish that long machine across the way would stop that awful screeching noise. Why did it not use oil on those two grinders that were smoothing down the surface of what she took for freight car wheels?

Off on one side was a press, whose dull drill was whining as it twisted its slow way through a piece of cast iron. It wailed as it struck a small hard section 'way down in the hole it was boring. The man looking after it came over and probably swore a bit as he grumbled:

"Why can't those foundry people use better iron? Feels like a piece of old hard window weight down there. How do they expect me to drill through stuff like that?"

Above the din an occasional moan could be heard from some engine that seemed unable to stand the pain as a rusted bolt was being driven out, or as a cold chisel was forced between some plate or casting. At every blow the 40 could be heard lamenting as a big man with a sledge attempted to dislodge a section of a burned out fire box.

The 17 felt she would go distracted if they kept it up. Now she began to wonder about the restful times that she had

heard engines had in the shops. It must be something like the operations men had, and about which they talked for hours afterwards, that is, if their listeners were unable to escape. She asked herself if she was going to suffer the way that engine did. And how she did hope that her fire box was all right. Yet she had a feeling that there was a place down by the mud ring which was far from what it should be, and trusted as we do at the dentist's, that the man with his pick or punch might not discover some cavity or crevice.

Late in the afternoon, when the whistle again blew, all instantly became silent and the men put away their tools, slipped off their overalls, changed their hats and caps and put on their street coats. More than one curious eye was cast in her direction, and more than once she heard:

"From the looks of the 17, she's likely to be here some time."

She listened as one man said, "I'm told her cylinders are in bad shape," and overheard another remark, "I understand her valves need truing up, and I'll be surprised if we don't have to do a lot of boiler work on her too."

When the last man had gone, all the engines in the shops were such nervous wrecks that little was heard except a whisper here and there, as some engine mumbled to herself about aches and pains. When the sun went down, and the darkness crept out from its hidden corners, an electric light here and there glowed like a great firefly, casting its yellow light to make shadow pictures of the engines and machines, on the walls and platforms.

All was silent until the 17 heard one engine off by herself complaining of the way she had been treated. This reminded one of the forties of her own operation, and as the number 10 which stood on the next track had troubles of her own and was a poor listener, the 40 spoke over her boiler to the newcomer.

The 17, not to be outdone, told of her trip west over the mountains, and of the difficulties she had encountered during the hard Wisconsin winter. Ignoring what the east end engine

had to comment on snows and winds, the 40 spoke of her own trip from Philadelphia, and told how very formal some of the eastern line engines were, and what a relief it had been to get to Chicago and be so cordially received by the engines of the western road, that hauled her up from Chicago.

Then, beginning to feel better, as most talkative engines do when they secure a good listener, she narrated in detail how they had begun the western end of the road; how nice it was working out on the first part of the line that ran through a hard-wood country, and of leaving that to go constructing across the rolling prairies. She told the 17 that in some places the road ran westward for miles without a single curve, and how it was possible to see a headlight away off in front, even before you could hear or know that there was an engine within miles. She was well along with her discourse when a lady-like voice spoke up from the dark:

"And isn't it glorious, No. 40, to go sailing by all those pretty lakes?"

The 17 whispered, "Whose lovely voice is that?"

"Oh," replied the 40, "she's the 301, named after your own Vice-President," as if everyone knew the three hundreds.

"And who might she be?" asked the 17.

"Why she's one of our west end passengers in for light repairs."

Noting that her listener was not properly impressed, she added, "She's one of those beauties that the Baldwins built for us."

"Not one of those with the red stacks and wheels?" asked the 17 with bated breath. "Oh, do let's listen to what she's going to say."

"Might be worth while, for she's dreadfully interesting when she tells why the Minneapolis and Pacific was built. You know she has run specials for our officials. Yes, as she and the 300 have been on many trips with them they have heard everything there is to hear. Would you like to have me ask her to tell you why we went on out to Dakota?"

"Please do, No. 40, for of course I'm interested in our road, and should know what's going on."

To show that her grates were in the right place, and to be obliging, the 40 raised her voice and called, "Oh, say, Miss 301, I want you to meet up with our 17, who is just in for a general overhauling. As she is from out east and knows little of what's been going on out here, I know she would appreciate it if you would tell her why we were built."

A refined soprano voice answered: "You know, No. 40, that I'm always glad to oblige any of those of us who have toiled and undergone the greatest hardships in building the road east that we in the west might have an outlet of our own, so if our new sister will only tell me what she would like to know, I'll do all I can to inform her."

The rather shy voice of the 17 answered: "Oh, thank you ever so much. I'll be greatly pleased if you will tell me about your M. and P., and the reason why some of you three hundreds were not built to run east as well as west. And I can say for those of us in the east that we look forward to the time when we can see and welcome you up in our forest country."

The 301, having spent a large portion of her time with big men, thoroughly appreciated the fact that if you had an important thing to discuss, it was always well to await a fit time and opportunity. Now being a friendly engine, she knew that the 17 was worn and tired, and so she replied in a tactful way:

"As we are both greatly fatigued this evening, why would it not be well to wait a day or so before discussing such a serious subject. Then I shall be more than delighted to answer all of your questions and relate our own short history."

It might be said right here in regard to history, that back East, or where the roads are very old, it has been more than rumored that at night when all is quiet in the shops and round-houses, the spirits of old engines come misting in to tell of early railway days, and the part they took in building the early roads. Probably few of us today as we study and watch the great iron horse waiting in the sunshine or rain, at the head of

its long freight or shining passenger train, appreciate the fact that the engine is much more than a mere thing of iron and steel. And we hardly realize that in serving their roads and country, they have their own joys and sorrows. As has been intimated before, it might indeed be well worth while for one with a swift and flowing pen to sit off in the shadows of a shop or round-house and note down for the future some of the tales of the past as related by these old spirits.

The 17's shop being a new one, built to care for new engines, there were none of these old spirits about, so the conversation was of the present, the morrow, and their ambitions for the future, which were largely to properly serve their own road and help build their own West into the greater nation.

They told of the little that they knew of the men on other lines, and spoke of the great cooperation there was between the officials of their own road, and how much their expressed sympathy and understanding meant to all, from the switch to the passenger engines, and from the section hands up.

Many of these engines were not ashamed to admit that they were built to work rather than to enjoy life, and that their services would be of such a nature that their road would be an example to all as to what a railroad might and did do for those living along its line. All agreed with the 15 when she closed the evening talk by saying,

"We are going to get a great deal more fun and joy out of life even in running freights, than some engines do with easy passenger runs, who consider they lead a more joyful existence."

CHAPTER XVII

MINNESOTA

NIGHTS later, when the silver moon turned yellow as it glimmered through the smoky windows of the shop, the 301 asked, "Are you still there, 17, and would you like to have me tell you the story of our Western road?"

"Yes, please do," answered that engine.

"Better tell her," broke in the No. 40.

Acting on their request the 301 began. "Of course our history is rather a short one, but not quite as short as some may think, for it takes in the past of some of the earlier roads. You must appreciate, 17, that in telling the story I shall necessarily have to quote what other engines have told me. However, on the whole I believe what I am going to relate is subject of proof and can be treated as entirely trustworthy.

"One road that I have in mind is the Minneapolis and St. Louis, and such information as I have secured came from their No. 47, whom I know quite intimately, as we have visited together many times when my duties have taken me to the Minneapolis terminals. I trust that some day the two of you will meet, for you have many interests in common. While the 47 is somewhat older than we are, she does not go back far enough to remember the early days of her road, but being of an inquisitive frame of mind, she has questioned and learned all that she might from their small No. 5. My friend has frequently said that all of her Minneapolis and St. Louis associates regard their No. 5 as the historian of their road, and it seems that her M. and St. L. did at one time what we are proposing to do today, not only for the 'Twin Cities, but also for this entire Northwestern country."

"And what was that?" inquired one of her listeners.

"Well, 17, many years ago, yes, before the Civil War, and even before the territory of Minnesota became a state, when there were few in this country except Indians, men of an exploring nature made their way into the then unbroken wilderness, and carried the word back to their eastern homes, of the great St. Anthony Falls, the endless forests of wonderful white pine, of the long rolling prairies of black fertile soil, and of a country jeweled with thousands of small lakes. So it does not seem at all strange that when these reports reached up into Maine and the New England states, that many of those depending on the rocky hillsides for a living compared what they had heard with their own rocky and worn fields. Others who had spent their lives in and had interests in the pine forests of their own states lent a willing ear, and regretted that they were too old, but did advise their sons to take advantage of this great lumber opportunity. Other men who had been brought up on the swift flowing New England rivers, and had seen them harnessed to great industries, visioned a coming great city at the far off falls of the Mississippi.

"Men of means and industry pointed out to their own blood the opportunities, and advised them to seek their fortunes in the new country. Up in the woods others—lumbermen—studied and drew lines on rumpled maps, marking the rivers and telling how the logs might be floated from these new forests down to the power-giving falls where they could be milled and then rafted as lumber down the great western river.

"The younger and more aggressive men, who had their way to make in the world, turned their eyes and then their footsteps toward the Northwest. Some visioned to their mothers, others to bright eyed farm girls, and still others to a town maiden or a city belle what might be the reward of those who first pioneered and became the builders of a great new Western empire.

"Plans were made during the long winter evenings, and when the snow left the rocky hillsides many vigorous and am-

bitious young men faced west with a locked-up promise that when they came back the ones they wanted most would return with them to build a far-off home of their own.

"All sent glowing reports back, and it was not long before these men of old Puritan stock and the spirit of youth were pushing their way through the woods, over the prairies from Chicago, and then on up the great waterway to the village of St. Anthony, the pineries of the north, and the farms that were already beginning to dot the flower-strewn prairies.

"The soldiers at old Fort Snelling, peering from their fortress on the high river banks, watched the river boats as they volleyed the wood smoke out of their great decorated stacks, and told the newcomers of the once feared Indians, of their own small saw-mill, and of the flour that was made from the wonderful wheat.

"Those who had gone into the woods were soon sending down the Mississippi and the Rum Rivers the logs that were to be turned into lumber at their own brown boarded rambling mills, for by this time they had dammed the waters, and the hungry whirling saws were ready to cut their way through the fragrant close grained white pine.

"The Red men, their squaws, and their papooses, squatting in the openings of their wigwams, or reclining on the green banks of the river, watched the working white man and sorrowed in their sullen way as to what was to become of their hunting ground.

"As the village of St. Anthony grew, small flour mills were built to grind the golden grain between their great turning stones. The village first sent tendrils of frame houses up and down the river banks and then out across a channel of the river to a wooded island, and as the demand for flour and lumber increased, the small town reached across the main river and started the building of a greater city that was later to take to itself the first settlement.

"The Civil War came on, and at Lincoln's first call for seventy-five thousand, men came from the farms and pineries,

from the towns and villages to let all know that their Minnesota was as one for the Union. After every battle the names of those who would never return were published, and for every name another man stepped forward to take his place and to show that there was to be no faltering in this north country. More women now tended the farms, more small children had their chores to do, and all left behind shouldered their burdens and helped care for those who would now have to carry on alone. The soldiers at the Fort down river tramped off, some to be left in the ice and mud before Donaldson, others on the field of Shiloh. And from then on through those dreadful years of the Sixties, Minnesota gathered her wounded and dead from every battlefield. The once supposed friendly and satisfied Indians, waiting until the men had gone, unsheathed their knives, sharpened their tomahawks, and went on the war path, scalping and murdering the men, women and children who had befriended them, and who were unable to escape from the farms to the small towns and villages where they might be protected.

"Finally the word came that Lee had surrendered to Grant, and soon the decks of the river boats showed blue from the uniforms and great coats of their own men who had gone out prepared to give their all. With these came others from the great Union armies who had heard of the free government land, and of the possibilities of the country.

"Soon every hand was again at the wheel of progress. More farmers went out on the land, more men into the pineries, and new and larger flour mills were sending their white dust into the air. The early comers who had visioned what might be, renewed their labors as they watched their country develop. They had said from the beginning, 'Our farms produce the finest wheat on earth; we have the greatest water power in the middle west; combining the two, it is only a question of time before Minneapolis flour will be known from one end of the earth to the other.'

"Their small mills first ground the flour for their own peo-



JAMES J. HILL RAN HIS RED RIVER CARTS



THE "WILLIAM CROOK" TOLD ME SO



HILL PUSHED HIS LINE OUT TO THE RED RIVER

From the *Minneapolis Journal*



MINNEAPOLIS BECAME THE FLOUR CITY

ple, until those down the river demanded their portion. Then the barrels were either rolled down the gang planks, or great black stevedores shouldered the sacks to the levees. The railroads reaching to the river coveted this new traffic, and being unwilling to share the business with the river boats, began sending their rails north. Some time before the War, the Milwaukee and Mississippi railroad was born in the small town of Milwaukee, to be built out to the river of its name. It lingered for a period but did reach the great waterway in time to take its part in the great civil strife. Here it remained until the prospects of a fast expanding traffic sent it across the river, on out through Minnesota.

"There was general rejoicing in the mill city when along in the late Sixties the word was received that the Milwaukee was coming. The men on the streets said 'If we can mill wheat the way we have done without a railroad, what can we not do when we get one, and if one comes, we will get more, even if we have to build them ourselves.'

"There was a celebration in St. Paul when the diamond stack of the first Milwaukee engine came across the Minnesota and Mississippi River and likely a more boisterous one, when she brought her first passenger train into the small brown station in Minneapolis. As the engines grew larger, No. 17, the running time was reduced between the northwestern cities and Chicago. All of the old families, to say nothing of the newcomers, fell quite in love with the squash-colored cars of their Chicago road, and bragged of the equipment of their trains.

"Later those around the milling center frowned and questioned the truth when it was rumored that their Chicago roads (for they then had more than one) were planning to make a lower rate on grain from the farms and towns on their own lines to Milwaukee, than they did to Minneapolis. The rumor became a fact, and the roads made the situation much worse when they allowed it to be understood that they intended to make their own city of Milwaukee the great milling center.

"The Minneapolis millers begged, pleaded and demanded,

not only with the presidents of the Chicago roads, but with all their officials, that they must not even consider doing the wicked thing they had in mind. Perhaps the officials smiled as they said to one another: 'Now that we have the Northwestern business in our hands, why not build up a greater milling center in our home town where there will be only two roads to handle it. If we encourage those Minneapolis people to build more mills they will at some time in the future send more and more flour up to the head of the Great Lakes, and East that way, and then where will we be?'

"When the next crop was harvested and the northwestern millers learned of the great amount of wheat that was moving from their own southern Minnesota to the Lake Michigan city to be ground into flour, they wailed and wrung their hands. However, finding that wailing and wringing their hands helped them little, they put their heads together and determined that something of a radical nature had to be done. They spread maps of the Northwest on their table and glowered as they traced the lines of their roads. As all agreed that nothing could be expected of them, they would try to prevail on other roads to come to their relief. They realized that the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy was too far away for them to expect help from that direction, but further north was the Great Rock Island System, the road that had first bridged the Mississippi to build across Iowa to the Missouri. Why not sound their president and persuade him to build up their way? Full of this idea they hurried to Chicago and explained their situation, and possibly asked how a road that had had the vision to pioneer its way west could have overlooked the great traffic opportunities of their Northwest.

"Possibly he unrolled his own map and pointed out to them how far off his own road was, or with paper and pencil showed them the millions it would cost to do what they had suggested. And why was it not more than likely that when he noticed the disappointment on their faces that he said, 'Gentlemen, while I cannot see any possibility of our building our road up to your city, I might suggest that if you build a line to connect with us,

the Rock Island will agree to establish such through rates as will protect your milling industry.'

"Perhaps this was about all that some of his visitors expected, for before any great time had elapsed the Minneapolis papers announced that their city was to have its own road to protect its own interests. While they did not say it in so many words, they did intimate where the Chicago roads might betake themselves, and to a knowing one who could read between the lines, their destination was clearly suggested. Word soon began to trickle about the city that men with surveying instruments were fussing around by the mills, and farmers driving in from the west wanted to know why men were asking the price of land, and who those fellers were in the buggies, who came and 'tromped' down their fields. Some whom they questioned said they didn't know or care, while others said nothing as they looked wisely off to the south from their office windows.

"Finally the papers came out with strong headlines saying that the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad had been incorporated: that it was to be built south to connect with a Chicago and St. Louis railroad. Some of the most prominent citizens and those behind the undertaking had long interviews as to what the M. and St. L. was to mean to their city, some going so far as to mention the wonderful passenger service they intended to install when the road reached Albert Lea and connected with the Iowa road that was to be built from the Rock Island to that point."

The 301, who had been detailing this long story, now drew a long breath and said, "I did not intend to go so fully into the matter, but as you seemed most interested, I possibly forgot myself and became tiresome."

"Oh, not at all," responded the 17. "I've enjoyed every word you have said, but won't you please go on and tell me what the men you spoke of did after all their talking and planning. Did they build their road?"

"Of course they did. Otherwise how could that St. Louis No. 5 have told me the history of her road."

"I'm sorry that I asked such a foolish question. But some

time, 301, won't you tell me the rest of the story about her road and why you intimated that the story of that road was like the building of our own?"

"Oh, I'm all talked out now, sister," responded the 301. "But perhaps I will some other evening, if you care to listen. Now let's all say good night."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE M. AND ST. L.

ENGINES are at times troubled with insomnia, especially when they are put into the shops after a long hard grind on the road. There are others on light runs that nap during the day, and so have a great deal to comment on when the real workers wish to rest their tired wheels.

The 301 was, as we have already discovered, one of the talkers. The 17 had already seen something of locomotives and of the world, so she was not altogether surprised when later that night the fancy passenger engine again spoke.

"I've been thinking over some of the other things that the St. Louis engines have told me, and as I am to make a special run out West tomorrow, it might be well to continue the narrative I so abruptly finished an hour or so ago."

The 17, though tired, concluded that she had better hear the rest of the story while the 301 was in the proper mood, so replied: "I'm anxiously waiting for you to go on."

The 301, encouraged, began: "It will probably interest you, 17, to know that one of the most enthusiastic promoters—in fact the President of the new road—was our own General. Being in the milling business at that time, he with others became so irritated at the attitude of the Chicago roads that he, with his associates, agreed to give all they could in ready money, and promised to give more when it became necessary. Yet it is hardly right to single him out, for not only the millers, but those having the interest of their city at heart subscribed to the stock of the new road. Nor were they few in number, for the St. Louis engine told me that in the old days, everyone rallied to the support of anything that would tend to improve their

city, or to increase its population, for as you may have heard of the former rivalry of Minneapolis and St. Paul——

"Well, when a sufficient amount of stock had been sold or subscribed to justify the building, they started at the very mills themselves, built north a short distance, then went through the outskirts of the city, and then turned south. Everything went well at the start, until the new line attempted to cross a small swamp that swallowed the dirt as fast as it could be dumped in. Believing that the next car or train load of dirt might finish the fill, they kept on. Those having the money end in charge, watched both the dirt and their money as it disappeared into the mud. At length the road did get across and started off on solid ground.

"They were soon to discover that the building of railroads was a more expensive undertaking than they had realized. It became necessary for the President to give a series of explanations as to where all the money had gone, and why he had to have more. The millers, knowing that their own prosperity was at stake, donated what they had in ready money, and perhaps a few of those most vitally interested paid up a trifle more than they had promised to furnish. The City watched as the work went on, and as long as men were not called on for money, they encouraged the builders and told them of the wonderful work they were doing for Minneapolis. Those who had contracted to do the earth work became rather uncomfortable and began to ask when they were to be paid. Yet they knew that unless the work went on they would not stand much chance of getting paid at all, so at first they paid out such money as they had and then went borrowing around themselves to get more.

"The merchants of the city who had at the start been most enthusiastic about selling supplies to the new company, began to have a worried look when their bills became overdue, and those they themselves had bought from, urged and then demanded that they pay at least part of what they owed.

"Not discouraged, for they could not afford to be, the pro-

motors were pushing the line south. All cheered up when it began to haul freight and make a little money, but this did not go far towards paying its bills. Under such circumstances it's likely that some who cherished their hard-earned money began to intimate that it might be well to try and sell their new road, and asked why anyone had ever prophesied that it would be a paying investment. These were more willing to express their opinions when those at the head of the affair were not about, for the expression of such opinions was not at all cordially received at headquarters.

"It goes without saying that the Chicago roads did not relish what was being done, and their comments hardly improved the credit of the new railroad.

"Those who owned lots in the city and land along the way, were quite enthusiastic, for they had nothing to lose, and it cheered them up to see the value of their holdings increase, without labor or expense on their part. The country people, who, up to the time of the building of the road, had been forced to drag their grain long distances over bad roads, gave all the support they could, this being almost entirely in the way of freight.

"When the builders became overly hard pressed, one man or a committee from the new enterprise might drop into a bank and intimate strongly that they had to borrow some money. The banker might positively inform them he had no money, and that if he had he would not lend them any more. To which they might reply: 'Well, if you don't let us have more, you'll never get back what you have already given us.' Then some man who was doing a prosperous business might mention in an offhand way the very satisfactory treatment to be had at some rival bank, either in their own city or outside. As the Minneapolis banking institutions depended on the mills and industries of the men who were promoting the road, they did not lead altogether pleasant lives. At the start, the road had been able to borrow money merely by asking for it. Later it became necessary for some of the directors or stockholders to

endorse the railroad's notes, and when some account simply had to be paid, it's quite probable that some directors had to reach down into their own pockets. If these were empty there was always a chance of getting a mortgage on their homes or some property they owned.

"Finally when their road had finished enough line to get an eastern banking concern to buy a few of their bonds, there was a general cleaning up of old debts, and it was then that the St. Louis No. 5 said that she was bought. The contractors, with money in their pockets and banks, bought more scrapers, plows and horses and pounded the work along faster than before. At this period the pessimists became less pessimistic, and the city began to grow by leaps and bounds. Now it was quite the proper thing for the prominent people to take a run down over the new line, and as there was no further request for money they became more and more enthusiastic about what the new road had done and was doing for their town.

"At last their new No. 5, with its train of light wooden cars, stood outside the small frame station, as the conductor shouted 'all aboard for Chaska, Waseca, Albert Lee, Chicago, St. Louis, and points on the B. C. R. and N. and Rock Island Railroads.'

"The road was finished, and long trains of loaded flour cars rolled off South and East. The millers smiled as they built new mills or extended their old ones to care for the increasing business. The papers called attention to the number of barrels of flour that were daily being turned out, and everyone knew that for every extra barrel an additional sum of money came to their city, and that their own Minneapolis and St. Louis had saved the day, and that it was their salvation."

"That is all very interesting," said the 17, when the 301 stopped for a moment, "but I cannot see how it concerned us. For, as you remarked, the St. Louis saved our people, and then the future of the city seemed assured."

"Yes, the M. and St. L. No. 47 quoted their No. 5 as making the same remark, and had said that everyone felt so secure



THE HISTORIAN OF THE M. & ST. L.



THE MINNEAPOLIS & ST. LOUIS "47"



THEY HAD HEARD OF THE GREAT ST. ANTHONY FALLS



OLD FORT SNELLING

on this question of protection of freight rates that even their President, our present General, with others, sold out their interest in the road, for they all believed that the city was out of the clutches of the Chicago roads for all time. He sought the nomination, and was elected to congress, where he went, feeling that he would be in a position to do more for his cherished northwest than if he remained at home."

"Yes," said the 17, "but might I ask what has his going to congress had to do with us?"

"If you can hold your steam for a minute or so longer, I'll tell you of the Manitoba road, but as you are evidently becoming tired, I will condense my narrative and say briefly what an old switch engine of that road, who had the story from the St. Paul and Pacific, said."

"I'm not getting tired," interrupted the 17. "What did the switch engine tell you?"

"As you urge me to go on, I'll quote her as nearly as possible. You have probably discovered by this time, No. 17, that engines that spend most of their time around yards waiting to do this and that are unusually discursive. This can hardly be said of any of the Manitoba engines, however.

"And why is that?" queried her listener.

"Some say the reason is they feel they are superior, due to the fact that their road has at times been able to make money when the rest of the roads had a hard time to make a living. There are others that maintain they have acquired their strange personality from the President of their road, who, it is claimed, is a very arbitrary man and cares little about the opinions of others."

"How absurd, 301, to even suggest that an engine is disagreeable because some men on her road have this peculiar personality you speak of."

"Not at all absurd. You will learn when you become older that the attitude and personality of a man at the head of an industry becomes the attitude of those working for him. I have noticed here on our own road, and I've been told the

same thing by Milwaukee engines, and they should know. Take that road, for instance. Their heads have always been kindly disposed, not only to their engines, but to all they have come in contact with. She has been the training school of a very broad-minded type of railroad man. The men that she has graduated have taken this spirit of doing and serving to every road they have been called to. Van Horne and Shaughnessy, the men who made the Canadian Pacific, learned their business on the old Milwaukee. Everyone knows of our General Manager and how we and others feel towards him."

The 17 smiled, if a cold engine can smile, while she replied: "What you have just said 301, seems unbelievable. I can't understand why a man, say, tamping ties, should in a way copy the manners of his President or General Manager."

"Nevertheless, they do, whether you believe it or not, 17. Why a case of this has just been brought to my attention. You may have noticed, but you probably haven't, for you haven't been living out our way very long——"

"Just what haven't I noticed, 301?"

Annoyed at being so interrupted, the 301 tartly answered: "Every engine knows from the touch of an engineer's hand whether he is in sympathy with her or not. Our own locomotives say it's seldom that they get a man that does not ease their work for them. I won't mention any names, but some engines that I know of are always complaining about the way they are hammered over their roads. They say their President tells his Manager, and he in turn informs all those under him even down to the engineers, that their engines are not doing enough work. So the men in the cabs, in order to hold their jobs, have little regard for the locomotive they are running. To make it worse the men operating the shops are informed that they are spending too much money, so less is done to keep the engines in proper repair, with the result that the men and engines become thoroughly discouraged and lose their interest in their work."

"Maybe that's the reason," answered the 17, "why some roads make money when others do not."

"And maybe the reason too," was the reply, "that farmers haul their grain farther to give it to a friendly road, and why they travel on roads that treat them with more respect. I know from personal experience that I do better work when I am properly maintained and carefully handled than when I am abused. Wouldn't you work harder yourself, 17, for a man you liked, than for one you feared?"

"You know as well as I do, 301, that any engine would."

Somewhat mollified, the other answered, "I was going to speak of a case we have on our own road when I began to discourse on other things. You may have noticed, 17, that one of our officials has had a series of painful excrescences on his neck. In fact they were so annoying that he became accustomed to hold his head down. Now to prove my point, I have noticed that a number of the younger men working about the office are holding their heads in the same position."

"I can't see that that proves a single thing," answered the 17.

"Well, it does," snapped back the other engine. "It establishes the truth of my statement; that men working under others imitate their superiors in all manners of ways."

"Oh, how ridiculous you are, 301, to say some clerk bends his neck because someone he is working for has a boil, for I assume that is what you term a painful excrescence."

The fancy engine, now thoroughly annoyed, retorted, "It's so, whether you believe it or not. It might be more admirable on your part to listen more and talk less. If you had appeared the least bit interested, I would have given you an instructive talk on the early railroad days of this country, but as you seem to care more for the flippant things of life, I will again bid you good night."

"Oh, I'm dreadfully sorry, 301, that I seemed flippant," was the quiet answer. "I certainly will try not to be, if you

will tell me of——" she hesitated, "was it the Manitoba road you mentioned?"

"It was," was the short answer. "Perhaps some day when I am in the proper frame of mind I may tell you, 17, a few things you should know."

"If eventually, why not now?" was the reply.

"Well, I suppose it might as well be now as eventually."

CHAPTER XIX

THE MANITOBA

THE 17 wondered if the 301's red wheels and stack gave her such a superior feeling that she felt justified in making the following remarks: "I've heard parents say to boys, No. 17, when sending them off to school, that it's very necessary for them to be so educated as to do their portion of the world's work, and that the doing of real things will bring them more happiness than if they become nothing more than floaters. It's a great deal the same with us. While we have no one to teach us as to how we must handle ourselves, and face various conditions that we shall have to undergo on the road, it is generally understood that the first engines on a new line must study their jobs, learn what they can about their country and their road, and then pass this knowledge on to the newcomers. Thus it is my duty to fully inform you, 17, of what I have learned.

"Now as to this Manitoba road, and their great James J. Hill, of whom you have of course heard a great deal."

"Not much 301, but that he's called the empire builder, and that some say he's the greatest railroad man in the country. I'd like to ask you if he is, and where he got his training."

"Whether he is or not does not greatly concern us, but as he is responsible for our road's being built, we should at least thank him for that. Answering your other question, experience trained him as it must engines. He came to this country from Canada, and his first work was in connection with the steamboats down in St. Paul, that formerly handled most of the business to and from this country. It was not long before he was running the great Red River ox carts, whose wheels

grumbled on their wooden axles all the way up to Winnipeg. He thus became familiar with that country and its possibilities. Watching for the opportunity, he, with some friends, managed to rake together enough money to buy the small broken down and discredited St. Paul and Pacific railroad that, even with its great name, had failed to build more than a few miles of road.

"I know that, for the William Crook, the first engine on that road, told me so, and of the great reception the people of St. Anthony and Minneapolis gave her when she pulled the first train in Minnesota from St. Paul to the up-river towns. The War brought everything to almost a standstill, and the small railroad remained dormant until Hill and his friends took hold, and with tremendous energy pushed their new line out across the state, under the name of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba. It goes without saying that while the Minneapolis people were sorry that the new line did not originate with them, yet they were delighted to have a road running out to their prairies.

"Men operating the grain elevators slapped each other's shoulders as they said: 'Fine business, for the faster the railroads go ahead with their building, the faster the country will develop. Every settler they locate on the vacant land means more bushels of grain for us to handle.'

"Those selling the farm machines built in their own city, and in St. Paul, called their own men together and planned on the increased number of plows, mowers, harvesters and threshers they would have to turn out to fill the orders that they were expecting to come in. The bankers behind their sometimes cold smiles, allowed their customers to increase their loans to enable them to lay in a larger stock of goods, so that they might also take advantage of the coming good times.

"The largest stores tore out partitions and put in new large plate glass windows, while some of the smaller ones became busy with paint brushes and dusters, to show that they intended to share the coming prosperity. Those living in

Minneapolis sent up a loud pæan of joy when the papers published the fact that more were attending their fair than the rival exhibition that was going on down the river at St. Paul. Their delight became unbounded when the census showed that Minneapolis had as many people as the older town, and in fact, even more. To use an expression of the times, the goose hung high, and the enthusiasm increased as its devoted citizens watched their business and their bank accounts grow.

"At first they boasted to one another that Minneapolis was to be the biggest city in the state. Later on they told the St. Paulites it was to be the metropolis of the Northwest, and now, unless some impossible thing transpired, they expected it to be the greatest center between Chicago and the Pacific Coast, and they thought it probable that some day it might challenge San Francisco itself."

The 301 stopped her history telling long enough to say, "You're not getting tired, are you, 17?" for she knew few are willing to admit they were bored or tired when asked in this direct way.

Her listener answered, "Oh, no, not a bit."

"Then I'll go on," she responded, "and say that during this period our people went about feeling cheerful and self-satisfied until what they had considered the impossible and improbable happened. The millers were complaining about the numbers of empty cars they wanted and received, and of such other things as shippers are accustomed to complain about.

"The Chicago roads, who had given them better service when the St. Louis began to take part of their business, now for some reason appeared less inclined to please. Men began to question each other if their once self-owned St. Louis road showed less interest in their industries than when first built. Perhaps there was more truth than fiction in the current talk that the new owners of the St. Louis preferred having their road more closely affiliated with the Chicago lines. It is possible too, that its owners felt that their short road might receive more business from its connections if it was not always de-

manding more for the Northwest. They, of course, hoped that it could be made a profitable earner and that they might sell it at a very satisfactory profit if they wished to do so.

"Under these conditions, was it to be wondered at that the millers and business men became perturbed, and asked each other if it would not be possible to build another railroad, this time so located as to be independent of Chicago and the roads that were always threatening the future.

"The City's old supporters with its newcomers now planned with our General, who was back from Washington. This time they had a map that showed not only their own country, but the whole north from the Mississippi to the Atlantic, for they appreciated the fact that it would be hopeless to ask further relief from the Chicago lines. They blue penciled a line on their map showing what could be done. It started at Minneapolis, went east through Wisconsin and up through the upper peninsula of Michigan, where it crossed the Soo River over into Canada. There they planned to connect with a Canadian line that might be persuaded to build down to meet them and thus furnish them a new and independent line east. Of what they proposed, and did, 17, you should know more than I do, for it's your part of our road."

"Yes, I am fairly well informed on that, 301, but as yet you have told little if anything, about why you were built, and what that Manitoba engine told that friend of a friend of yours."

"So I haven't, but I trust that I have given you an outline of what went on. Now I will answer your request, and post you concerning my part of our own road. Even while our people were looking forward to the time when their new line to the east should be completed, men from up in the country were beginning to ask one another what that new railway was that was being built across the northern part of the state. Some up their way supposed that the Manitoba road was going to build a short cross line cut from the Red River wheat country to Duluth."

"What did the millers do then, No. 301?"

"Do? They questioned the truth of these rumors that originated in St. Paul, and did not believe that James J. Hill had determined to make the head of the lakes the great milling center of the country. Knowing of the low cost of transportation on the lakes he began work on the short cut that was to connect with his network of railroads out on what was termed the bread basket of America, and give them a short line to his proposed milling and shipping point. Having built the road, he proceeded to make lower rates from the wheat growing country into Duluth and West Superior, than he did to Minneapolis.

"Indeed a serious situation faced our people. What good were their mills, and their new road east, if they could not secure the grain that was already beginning to flow from them to the lakes? What made the Minneapolis situation still worse was a new line Hill was building from the southwest up toward his new center, slipping by Minneapolis a hundred miles west, like, some said, a thief in the night.

"Then, 17, our people convened again, and determined on our own Minneapolis and Pacific. It was said that at the first meeting a great map of the state of Minnesota was unrolled, and that the two Hill roads running west from Minneapolis were outlined in dark colors. There they were starting at this city, one turned slightly north, the other slightly south, and then westward until they met out in the Red River wheat country. Both were cut by the new Southwestern line that crossed them at their middle, on its way to the head of Lake Superior. On the map they appeared like two great hands that might squeeze the country between, and force the grain and business off on the new cross-country road to Duluth.

"It is said that one member of the meeting took a ruler, and drew the new proposed line midway between the two crushing Hill lines. How they managed to raise the money I was never informed, but they did start the building of the Minneapolis and Pacific road against the determined opposi-

tion of the great railroad creator down the river, who did his utmost to prevent this new rival from breaking into his own private preserve. He told them and others that such a line as they proposed to build was impossible, due to the contour of the country, and if by any chance it was constructed, it would be a financial failure."

After a pause the 301 continued: "The road was built, and the same rates were made from the wheat producing country to both Minneapolis and the head of the Great Lakes."

"Gracious, that's interesting," interrupted the 17.

"Yes, isn't it?" responded the narrator, "but that's not all. Hill was more or less right. Our money gave out, business did not develop as fast as they expected, and our people feared the future, until the great Canadian Van Horne and his road, the Canadian Pacific, came to our rescue and arranged that we might get enough funds to carry out our plans, and in return he secured for his kindness and vision a fast growing traffic for his C. P. R.

"I think I have now told you enough so that you can appreciate what our builders went through and how we happened to be a part of the same system."

"And aren't the Minneapolis and St. Paul people, to say nothing of the folks out on the western lines, devoted to our road?"

"They most assuredly are," answered the 301.

An ironic voice from a leased freighter broke in. She was an engine of another make and road that had come down to help them out during a heavy rush of business. Having done so, she was now being put in condition to be returned to her own road and its iron ore business.

"It's more than likely that everyone is enthusiastic now, proud of you and your people; but wait and see if they will remember what you have done for them, and if they will continue to be always as loyal and helpful as they are now."

"Of course they will," answered the 301 in a more determined voice. "That is, if we continue to safeguard their in-

terests as we were built to do, and to serve them as we always have."

She added in a low voice that the stranger might not hear: "That engine is an awful pessimist. We all know she looks on the dark side of life. Probably she does because of the fact that her company is getting heavier engines, and of course she's worried, as well she may be.

"While I am not much older than you are, 17, I'd say never allow any engine to persuade you to become dormant and discouraged. I once heard our President say: 'If you cannot become enthusiastic about the work you're doing, you'd better try some other job, for little can be accomplished without enthusiasm.' So, 17, always be an optimist, for you get more out of life, you can do more, and will be much happier. Well, now as I've told my story, I'm going to sleep, for I'm truly tired out."

CHAPTER XX

OUT AT LAST

ALL during the cold winter the 17 had stood off on her track listening to other engines as they told of what was going on outside. She looked forward to spring, when she felt assured that she would again be out in the woods pulling her passenger train. The dismal month of March turned into a smiling April that found the still unrepaired engine waiting to be overhauled. At first the long rest had been rather enjoyable, but now it was certainly becoming most humiliating to watch her old friends come and go.

During the winter they had inquired how she was getting on. Now it seemed to her that those passing through avoided asking when they were to see her out again, as if they felt she might have some incurable disease, or was being held for some bad record she had made on the road, and while sympathizing, they hated even to intimate what some of the engines she hardly knew were saying. She felt that there must indeed be something wrong with her when her old pal the 21 rolled in. While she was most cordial, the 17 felt an estrangement, for that engine seemed to avoid any reference to the past and their old close association.

More than once during dark nights the once popular 17 had asked herself what she had done to be so treated; had she not done her work to the best of her ability? Of course there was the time when that 23 had run by a signal and hit her head on, smashing her pilot and splintering her bumper beam. Every engine on the road had said at the time that it was not the 17's fault. Outside of that there were the few draw bars or couplers she had broken, and the usual number of coupling links she had snapped, but no one could blame her, for in the

winter time they were very brittle and broke like glass. Maybe her reputation had been harmed by an engineer who held a grudge against a brakeman. To her it had seemed that no engineer was a very good sport who took advantage of his position to send cars together at an excessive speed, purposely attempting to catch a trainman's hand between the couplings. Yet on the other hand, it was annoying to have a brakeman swear at you and occasion unnecessary switching, especially when he boasted about it. Was it possible that these minor troubles were the cause of her present trouble?

Once, overly perturbed, she wondered if the 20 was responsible, and had been blaming her for some of her own discreditable actions. She felt one might easily suspect an engine like the 20, who might do all possible to discredit another engine that was off the job. Her position was becoming more difficult every day, for engines that she had once known and others that were strangers went through the shops, saying to her with a peculiar look:

"Oh, you are still here, are you, 17? I've heard you were."

The longer she remained the more positive she became that there was certainly something radically wrong. Why could not some of her supposed friends inform her what it was all about; did they consider they were showing any great amount of loyalty by hiding what they knew, instead of frankly telling her what was wrong, so that she might explain or apologize for something she might unintentionally have said or done.

Time made the 17 more depressed and totally unlike the once friendly engine she had been, so that her present attitude might encourage others to accept the rumors that were being circulated, not only concerning her ability, but also her integrity. She was certainly in a dreadful position, being unable to deny certain unnamed charges and insinuations, or prove them false. Yet how could she do so without losing her self-respect? If some engine would only develop enough enginehood to come out and boldly demand an explanation then she might find out what it was all about.

She disliked more than ever her weak and spoiled sister, the 20, when she came in for a general overhauling, and said, after giving her a condescending look:

"I'm so sorry 17, that it's true that you are still here. We on the road have been wondering for some time if you were ever going to be out again. Of course I've told everyone that you've been worked so hard that it was the most natural thing in the world that there should be a great deal to be done on you."

The 20 did not even intimate that she had also said: "Isn't it unfortunate that our sister 17 hasn't the same vigorous constitution that most Baldwins have?"

"We must not blame her but must realize that an engine in her nervous, depleted condition can hardly be expected to enjoy life and be willing to accept its heavy responsibilities." Probably the most contemptible remark she made was:

"We all know of course that the 17 is absolutely honest and well intentioned, but what a pity it is that she lacks the something that makes engines successful."

Apparently kind comments of this order are the ones that cut deepest, and indirectly ruin an engine's future, for what road would want a well-intentioned engine if she could not handle her trains?

At another time the 20 said to the 17, "What a pity it is that you should be under the weather these nice days. It's been so perfectly lovely out on the road, and how I do hope, dear sister, that you will very soon be all right again. Don't allow anyone to so sympathize with you as to make you a chronic invalid. No, do not become too discouraged, for perhaps the time may come when you will be strong enough to handle a light passenger run, perhaps out of here. That would be nice, for the work is not so very hard except where the road runs out of the St. Croix Valley. The country is so beautiful that no one is likely to complain if you falter on the climb. I'll promise to do all I can to help you get an easy job. You know we'll all be delighted to see you out again, so cheer up and do not lose your courage."

The 17 was certainly relieved when they put the finishing touches on her disagreeable sister. She breathed easier through her dirty flues when the 20 was sent off on a distant part of the road. It seemed that her heart was breaking during these long idle months, and if it had not been for the times her kind-hearted Master Mechanic came out when no one was around, and sat in her cab talking to himself, she would have been willing to have been scrapped.

Finally when she had given up all hope, and was regarding herself as a failure, work was started, and they even went so far as to put on her new stack, and so rub up her front end with plumbago that it shone like leaded silver. She knew that her tender was waiting for her out in the paint shop, for more than one engine had told her what an exceptional paint job had been done. And they had also told her of the new red trade mark that had been painted on it with the greatest care.

More than once when she had expected to slip out the next day, some man would come in and borrow from her a connecting rod, or some other part he had to have to send some other engine out. Strangely enough, they always took a part she absolutely had to have if she were to go out herself. Once the General Manager had walked in with her mechanical boss. She was all excited when they came and stood under her cab. She heard the G. M. say, "When are you going to let us have the 17, Scott? You must know that we're needing engines very badly right now."

Her shop friend had replied: "Yes, so I've heard. We found more work on her than we had expected, but we'll do the best we can for you."

It was a month later when they again visited her, and she heard the same question, with the answer:

"She was about ready when we had to borrow a connecting rod for the 20."

The 17 felt it was bad enough to be robbed of parts for a hard working engine that she cared for, but to be robbed of one of her own fine rods to fit out that worthless machine seemed more than she could stand.

Once again they came. This time the Manager said in a voice that could not be misunderstood:

"Scott, I want that engine, and want her at once. Now see to it that I get her."

That night when all had gone, Scott slipped up beside her. He did not pat or pet her but his actions indicated his fondness. He spent a longer time in her cab, toying with and caressing her levers, something in the same way her William had, when she had first come to the road.

The Manager, evidently thinking that there was something peculiar going on regarding the 17, came back in less than a week. He came out into the shop by himself and found that she was in the same shape as before. There was fire in his eye when he started for the Master Mechanic's office. The shop man, when he returned from a trip on the road, was informed that the "Old Man" had been over again, and after some stirring remarks, had ordered the 17 out, and had told them in unmistakable language that she was to run a special the next afternoon.

The Yes Sir-ing he received probably made him more provoked, for on leaving he said: "Tell Scott that I've been here, and unless that engine is on my train tomorrow, look for trouble."

Scott's assistant, knowing the Old Man's words had to be obeyed, hurried into the shop, gathered up all the men that were needed and before the whistle blew that night, the 17 was out in front of the round-house with her bright tender and, glory be, a fire was crackling in her furnace.

Next morning, after she had been given a run over the road to see that all was right, she was slowed off of the turntable and sent out on the main line. It seemed years ago that she had come in, dirty and tired, from her job in the East.

Now that her valves had been fitted, she breathed more easily, and what a relief her turned tires were, for she no longer had to worry lest they jumped the track. She heard the 27 say to the 15,

"Isn't it fine to see the 17 out again, and doesn't she look

nice? I wonder how long it will be before they trust us with the road's trade mark?"

She looked up with a start. Was it possible that she was not a failure after all, and that her friends did like her? Why had she listened to that mean and contemptible 20; she should have had more sense than to have believed a word she had said. As she moved by the station there was the large switch engine sitting out in front like a great bulldog, watching what was going on. She was such a sullen looking individual that few had ever thought of speaking kindly to her, so she remembered the 17, and the complimentary comments she had made about the way in which she handled her yard work.

Looking up, she gave the once despondent engine a most gracious smile and said in her hard, rather coarse switch engine voice: "I'm glad to see you out again, 17. How well you look. Any time you need a little help on the hill, don't fail to call on me. I'll always be willing to give you a helping wheel or so."

There was a sniff from over beyond, and the familiar voice of the 20 called out: "Yes, switcher, and she's likely to need it more than once unless I miss my guess."

"Maybe so," was the rough response, "but if your guess is like most of the ones you have made, as to how many cars you can handle and switch, I imagine no one need worry about your opinions."

The 17 broke in: "I thought the 20 had gone East for passenger service. She told me that was what she was planning to do."

"Passenger service nothing!" answered the switcher. "Since we disposed of that single framed track jumper we formerly had, the 20 has been trying to help out about the yards. It's just as I told the yard master, that if he'd keep her away, I could do all the work myself if you road engines would help out a bit when needed." Raising her voice, so that the 20 might hear, the switcher continued: "Yes, and the yard master said to me in a somewhat profane manner,

"Yes, 32, you are probably right, but as no one wants her

out on the road, and as she's got to do something, I suppose we've got to keep her here. But I know where I wish she were,' and he told me where."

It was certainly interesting to go picking off through the yards down past the great mills that were sending great piles of fragrant pine lumber to the spurs and switches. If she had not been so interested, she might have been somewhat frightened as she rolled on over the great Northern Pacific bridge that spanned the Mississippi River. Yet there was a feeling of safety under her wheels, for being a steel bridge, it did not creak and groan as some of the wooden ones did on her own road. She wondered if the N. P. had all steel bridges, as she threaded her way through their freight yards, for she knew that her people had a terminal arrangement with that road, allowing them to maintain a small passenger station on the N. P. property.

She gave a friendly puff, when in glancing about, she caught sight of several N. P. engines standing outside of the jointly used round-house. While none of them were very large they gave her a very friendly welcome, and told her that they were glad to see her and that they trusted she might happen around more often. As she backed through the yard, she saw the small station, with a combination and two private cars standing out in front. How delightful it was to see that interesting 99 again, and what a pleasure it would be to give it another run out over the road. But who was that rather shabby 222 car, which looked as if she needed a coat of paint? Perhaps she belonged to the General Manager.

While she had rather liked the engineer that had brought her over from the shops, there was a certain lack of interest in his handling, so that after he had coupled her on to the three cars, she was not altogether sorry when he stepped off and said:

"Here is your engine, William. She seems to be in good shape, and handles well."

She shot a look across the track, and to show her delight, sent a welcome of steam through her safety valve. There was

her own William again, in his clean faded blue overalls and engineer's cap. She had seen the welcoming look on his face as he passed his keen, all-seeing eyes over her. Now his mouth hardened as he scowled at her for showing affection by this waste of steam. She knew that he would ask her before long if she didn't know that the cost of fuel was a great item of expense, and whether she realized how much her display of affection had cost the road. Yet she could not help but note the expression of kindness in those ocean colored blue eyes as he saw how well his once pet now appeared.

She heard him say: "Goodbye, John, I hope she's as fit as you say she is, for someone may get into trouble if your folks have not done a good job on her."

Gathering in his oil cans he poked here and there as he had done so many times before. She knew that he was as glad to get her back as she was to have him for her engineer again.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SPECIAL

THERE had been several occasions in the past when the 17 had been taken off her train to hurry some wounded railroad worker to a hospital to be operated on. It was thus quite natural that she should become attached to some of the railroad physicians and familiar with many bodily ailments. On this bright day when her engineer was drinking his lukewarm coffee from the lower compartment of his dinner pail and finishing off his lunch with a piece of apple pie from the top tray, she was happily looking forward to the future and remembering the awful operations she had undergone in the shops.

She felt her mechanics or doctors had done wonders, and was amazed to find out how well she felt. While her men had not referred to her thin plates as peritonitis, nor to that acute pain in some of her flues, where some foreign substance had lodged, as appendicitis, she had known at the time that she was in a very serious condition and had doubted if any operation might be entirely successful, and whether she would ever be able to run a fast passenger train again. Here she was however, as good as new, waiting for her officials, and yes, there they came now.

In the lead was her General Manager, and talking to him, a tight mouthed man who did more listening than talking. Behind them followed a very kindly looking man who smiled and joked as he walked down the steps of the station. She wondered who the quiet man might be—possibly some new official she had not met, for he seemed to be all eyes as he walked about the train. He nodded to her William, and from the expression on his face, she judged that he considered the

time and money they had spent on her paint and varnish an unnecessary expense, not appreciating how much paint and varnish adds to an engine's spirit of daring. While she was wondering if she could ever care for him a carriage drew up in front of the station. Several of the railroaders hurried to it and were gathering in the bag and baggage, when she saw her tall dignified President step down, followed by a trim looking little lady with a small boy and girl tagging on behind. Now he did not appear nearly so severe as he guided his own party to the 99, where it was welcomed by the friendly black porter, who wanted to know if the Madam and her chilluns were well. He said he was glad that they were to be his charge, and was starting to tell of the wonders he was to perform in the way of dinner he was just naturally going to serve. He was interrupted by the General, who said,

"George, the future will judge as to your culinary capabilities."

"It sho' will, suh, and I jest know what that same future am going to prognostitate," he returned, as he helped his mister General up the steps of the 99.

No one but an engine could know how contented the 17 felt about her fine fire, or the spirit of gladness that throbbed through her as the General Manager waved from the platform for her to go on. She knew from the way the steam was eased into her cylinders that her engineer had the same feeling about this half pleasure and half inspection trip.

The two N. P. engines gave her a puff as she slipped by, and the only thing that disturbed her in the least was the sullen look on the face of her Master Mechanic, whom she saw on the station platform as they passed by the shops. What could be the matter with him? Wasn't he proud of her and glad to see her out, or was it that he had not been invited to go along?

As they approached the grade that led from the yard, she heard the Switcher say: "Guess you don't need any help today, 17. I hope you have a pleasant trip."

More than once she murmured her delight to her listening

engineer as they glided along over the rolling farm country, 'round about small silver lakes, and through green patches of forest. She gave a throb of delight as a curve of the road brought them out on the high ridges of the St. Croix River, that wondrous little river that picked its way in the summer sunshine between the wooded Minnesota and Wisconsin hills, like a silver and gold ribbon unrolled by some unseen hand. Off through the elm and maples she glided, past the restful, peaceful village of Marine, that might have been transplanted from New England. It nestled in the shade of the river, clustered about the small white church, whose spire, rising from its bed of green, pierced the blue sky as if in search of the Maker of its beautiful valley.

Down, down into the valley the 17 slipped her train, and over the brown bridge that hopped the river at its narrowest part. She was so entranced that she hardly felt the additional steam her William gave her as they climbed and curved around the broken limestone ledges of the river. Slipping from a torn and ragged cut or out of a patch of green, she here and there caught a sight of some small brooklet, that, having squirmed through the forest hills, now picked and gurgled its way through a grove of tall ferns that sheltered small clusters of maidenhair. A small cedar with its roots bedded in dark green moss banked the water from a rockbound spring into a narrow crevice, where it glistened in the summer sunshine. Farther along on the other side of the river a trickling brook half threw itself over a broken ledge to pass through rainbows of its own making, down over birches and pines hanging to the rugged cliff, to catch part of the veil-like mist that lost itself in the long shadows fingering the river banks.

She was thinking how worthwhile life was when they came to a halt at the little town of Osceola. Here the General, with the small boy's hand in his own, came up alongside the 17, and looking up, said: "How are you, William? I'm glad to see you again. Wonder if you'd like to give my small boy a ride?"

She heard her engineer's answer: "Of course, General,"

and to his fireman, "Help the General's son up, Frank. Better put him in front of you on your seat."

It was not long before the small stranger was asking what that wheel was for and what those bubbles were doing in that dirty glass. While he was still wanting to know all sorts of things, the President and his freight man went inside the station. They passed around in front of the squat pot-bellied stove and the slatted front window of the office, and back to where the agent was waiting to receive them.

The General spoke. "You've got a pretty location out here, Mr. Brown." Hardly waiting for an answer, he asked about the Osceola flour mill; how they were doing and how his old friend, the President of the Company, was. Turning to his freight man he inquired how much business the mill was giving the road.

Learning that they were not receiving as much freight as he thought they should, he said: "Too bad. You'd better drop off here some day, or invite them to drop in to see you. We should be able to help him sell more, and when they come in, don't fail to bring them around to see me."

Then, looking across the table at his agent, he asked, "Comfortable out here? Well, that's good." He hesitated. "Let's see: you once told me, didn't you, that you came from down near Mankato? Ever know a Dickinson down that way? I did too when I ran for Congress, for I used to drive all over the country." With a retrospective look, "At times I spent the nights with farmers. Wonder if you ever happened to meet my old friend Hans Schmidt down near Owatona. He was one of the first settlers. Let's see—guess he went there in '59. He had a wonderful farm, too," and with a smile, "He used to get me a lot of votes down that way. Now, about yourself—married?"

"Yes, General, ten years."

"Huh, then you ought to have some fine children. Have you?" in rather a demanding voice.

"Yes, two boys and a girl."

"I suppose they are going to school?"

Then after discussing the matter of bringing up children, he said, "You haven't told me about your wife. Who was she? Well, isn't that interesting. She must be the daughter of my old friend Adams, near Montgomery. You tell her I used to know her father when he ran the livery stable. He helped me too, in getting the right of way for the St. Louis road. Tell her that some day I hope to see her and talk over old times down near her home."

Rising, he looked about the office as he said: "Now, I know our General Manager is cooling his heels outside waiting for us, and we," calling to his freight man who was looking over some reports, "must be going. Hope to see you again, Brown. You'll get as much freight for us as you can, won't you?"

The rest of the afternoon and the next day they went on over the road, stopping, it seemed to the 17, at every siding where there might be a chance of getting a car or so of freight. At the larger towns where they crossed other roads, they visited every mill that seemed to have freight possibilities, as they did at every thriving village that was centered around some forest industry. The General usually asked about how much timber they had left, how much they were cutting, and where it was going. Sometimes, on finding that it was being shipped to some town that could be reached by their own line, he would ask their freight man, how about it. And more than once he said:

"Why do we turn this lumber that's milled on our own line, and that is going into Iowa or Minnesota, over to a competing road, when we might get a long haul by taking it to Minneapolis?"

There seemed to be nothing about the road, the people living on it, or their lives, in which he was not interested and had to hear about, and it seemed to his little lady who sat off in her own corner reading, as if his officials relieved one another in answering his questions.

Up in front, for the first fifty miles out of Osceola, the

son sat with his feet braced against the front of the cab, as he watched the great engine go tearing off through the woods. While they stopped at one station, the fireman put the bell cord into his hands, and from then on he kept it ringing. Determined in his own mind that some day he was going to be a railroad man himself, it was altogether too soon for him when the porter of the 99 came up ahead and dragged him back to the car. He sought a seat where he could see and hear all as he listened as his father and his assistants discussed everything about railroads, and only lost interest when the talk turned to politics and the chances of a certain congressman from Wisconsin or Michigan going back to Washington.

At dinner that night and afterwards, when the Captain told of putting the road through the great wilderness, and of other roads he had built, the General Manager would break in with stories of his old Milwaukee, of its president and of its earlier days. The boy always listened to him, for he was a most lovable and interesting story teller, and was always ready to answer any and all questions. He was delighted when his mother entered the conversation, for she always knew just how to get them talking on the most interesting things about the railroads they had built and run. It was indeed hard when he was sent off to bed early in the evening, but not to sleep, for many times during the night he slipped up the curtains and peered out into the darkness, wondering how long the woods would last, and if there would be as many exciting things going on when he grew up and ran an engine himself.

All too soon for him, the 17 turned her train, and it seemed no time before they were back in Minneapolis, where school waited, and everything else was going on as if he had never been away.

CHAPTER XXII

ROMANCE

THE day after they had returned from the inspection trip, the General Manager, feeling that all might not be well with old friend Scott, concluded to go to the shops and make his peace. Walking smilingly into the Master Mechanic's office, he was told Scott was in the round-house, and feeling rather uncertain as to his reception, strolled through the coach shop, stopping here and there to talk to the men who were busy looking after the work on the passenger equipment.

After making some suggestions as was his custom, he drifted casually over to the round-house, and entering the end door, moved along in front of his iron horses in their stalls. Here was one with its front end open, with a man working in its dirty insides, there another blocked up on great square timbers with its wheels in the pit. The next was an engine just in off the road, and beside her one panting steam, all ready to go to her train. 'Way down at the end, he found Scott going over the 17.

Scott looked up and caught sight of the General Manager. Hesitating a moment, he came towards him with a forbidding expression on his face. He was saluted with, "Your 17 handled herself well, Scott."

"Why shouldn't she?"

Overman answered, with a smile, "Maybe she was not quite ready."

"Just what do you mean by that?" demanded the mechanical man.

"Little," was the response, "except that while you've been promising and getting her ready for months, she was never prepared to go out, so I concluded to fool you."

As his man remained silent he continued: "And you needn't get sore about it, either." As there was no response, "Suppose you're provoked because I went over your head and told your men what to do."

"Yes, I am," was the short answer.

Then Overman replied, "Well, maybe I didn't do just the right thing."

The Master Mechanic exploded. "How do you expect anyone to run your damned old railroad if you go over their heads. What kind of discipline and support can I expect from my men if you are going to come over here and tell them what to do? Yes, I am mad, and you know I have every right to be. I had certain plans for this engine, and without consulting me, you've upset all my arrangements."

Knowing that he was to blame, but not wishing to admit too much, the General Manager asked in a more conciliatory voice, "And just what were your plans, Scott?"

"There's no use in discussing what I intended doing, for the matter does not concern me—nor have I the slightest interest in what you do in the future."

"Meaning just what, Scott?"

"Simply," replied the man, "that on your return to your office you'll find my resignation." Feeling rather unhappy, he added, as if to excuse himself, "As I'm tired of this job, you'd better find someone to take my place."

The manager, appreciating the gravity of the situation, and noting the men who were hanging around behind the engines that they might hear what was going on, took his old friend by the arm, saying as he did so, "Let's go outside, Scott, and talk it over."

When beyond the range of the listeners, he went on: "If I admit I was in the wrong, will you tell me if you have other grievances?" Watching the silent man's face, he continued, "There's always been something peculiar, Scott, about you and that engine 17. What is it, for she's like all the rest of them?"

Evidently he had struck home, for the man turned on him.

"She's nothing of the sort, but what difference does it make to me whether she is or not, for I told you before that I'm through."

"Suppose, Scott, we won't accept your resignation, or allow you to leave. No, on the whole, I don't think we will. We need men who do their work the way you do, and whom we can depend upon and trust."

"Trust me a pile, don't you, A. B. O.?"

"Yes, I always have, and always expect to, Scott. Now that we have settled that, what more can I do for you?"

"Not a damned thing. I'm leaving."

"No you are not. Even if I have to promise you anything you ask."

"Am I to assume that you are willing to grant any request I make, Mr. Overman?"

"Most assuredly. I'll promise you anything, as long as you won't demand too much." Thinking to himself, "Now he's going to ask for that new wheel lathe he's been demanding for so long, and he's probably picked the most expensive one in sight, but I'll see to it that the Purchasing Agent has something to say about it."

Knowing that the man was waiting, he demanded: "Well, Scott, what do you want?"

He was certainly astonished when his Master Mechanic snapped at him: "I want the 17, and I want to go out on the road with her, and far enough away so I'll be let alone." He added, "And where no one else will have a chance at her."

"But Scott, that's absolutely absurd. You're making more money here, and your job's getting bigger all the time. I'll say it's absurd."

"Give me the 17, Mr. Overman, or I go to some other road."

"Well, Scott, if I can't have you where I need you most, I suppose that I'll have to put you where you want to go. May I ask where that is?"

" 'Way out East."

"But Scott, you know that there is little if anything out that way. How about your wife and your children? Consider them."

"I have. Can I have the 17?"

Knowing that his loyal Scott was serious, and that the man would leave unless he agreed to his terms, Overman said, "All right Scott, if you must, I suppose you must. When do you want to go," and with a smile, "When will your 17 be prepared to go?"

A relieved friendly expression came over the man's face as he said, "If you don't mind, A. B. O., I'd like to do a little more work on her and fix her up a bit. It won't cost very much, either."

"All right, Scott, fix her up to your heart's content. And when you get tired of your home in the woods and are ready to divorce your engine, let me know and we'll see what can be done for you."

"That's so far off, Mr. Overman, it's hardly necessary to discuss it. Let me off as soon as possible for our new Limited is going on in a few weeks, and I'd like to take my engine out and break her in, for of course I'll handle the Limited."

"Of course you will Scott," and smiling, "I'll know enough not to go riding over men again."

"Maybe you will, but I doubt it. Yet I'll say, if it's any comfort to you," he grinned, "I've been planning this for a long time. Perhaps that's the reason that there has been some little delay in getting my engine out."

When the 17 was dragged back to her old place in the shops next day, she wondered what it was all about, for she knew she had handled herself and train in a most satisfactory manner, for all had said so. She was naturally elated when her Master Mechanic kept dropping in every few hours to see that the work he had ordered was being properly done. She was certainly startled when the word passed through the shop that Scott had thrown up his job and was going to take the 17 out East and run the Limited.

All the men and engines discussed the matter, and every night more engines congratulated her, and nearly every one of them wished she were in her place. Even one of the exquisite three hundreds who was named after a prominent lumberman who had helped survey the road, hoped she appreciated the great opportunity that had come her way, going so far as to say: "If I were a trifle heavier I'd be glad of your chance."

She heard indirectly that the 20 had been quoted as saying, while switching: "Really, how perfectly absurd to pick that forlorn old 17 for such an important job. If he wanted a fine, dependable engine," she sneered, "I might have arranged to go with him."

A friend of the 17's tartly replied: "I admire your sense of humor, 20, and as for the 17 looking forlorn, she's as pretty as a picture, and we're all extremely pleased, for she's always been a good sport, did her work without grouching, and kept right on doing it when she should have been in the shops, unlike some I know of, who would rather die on the road than make a few additional miles."

"If you're referring to me," snapped the 20, "I'm not interested in your opinions, never have been, and never will be."

She was indeed a proud 17 when she steamed up outside of the round-house. If she had not been of a quiet, sensible turn of mind, her stack would certainly have been turned when the former Master Mechanic came out in his new overalls and his long visored black cap, to run her out to the head of a freight he was to use in breaking her in. Minor officials stood on the platform of the small brick station to wish him good luck, and to comment among themselves on the idiocy of any man who would give up a fine position to go off into the wilderness that he might run a favored engine.

She could not help hearing what her fellow-locomotives were saying. There was one of the three hundreds saying to a forty: "I saw the 17 when she came in, and if anyone had sug-

gested that she had the fine lines and hidden beauty that she now exhibits, I would have denied it."

"Me too," answered the representative of the forty class. "They've certainly done wonders with her. That new trim stack sets her off something fine. It makes me wonder how I will look when I get one like it."

The big switcher mumbled, "Yes, she's a credit to the road, and I am sorry that we are not to have her with us here in the city, she'd make some of those conceited Chicago road engines feel cheap. But I hear we're fixing up some more of her class to run the new Limited out of St. Paul. That will help some. Well there she goes—let's all give her a hearty whistle."

"Good idea," answered the others, and when they turned on their steam, their engineers gave a start as they heard blasts from their own engines. Each looked up, smiled and said to himself, "Well maybe she knows best, after all."

Oh, how good it did feel to have an engineer all her own. With a flush of pride, "It's almost as if I were to be the pride of the road and I certainly appreciate the feeling shown by all my friends on my advancement."

They climbed the Shoreham hill, rolled along the St. Croix, and some hours afterwards crossed the Omaha. She saw the remains of her old slab round-house, the small station, and the log cabins that had once housed her officials. Now the place was dead, for it was no longer the terminal of the road, and was not even a freight division post. How long ago it did seem since she had come north on that moonlight night with all her life before her. Now she had been tested and not found wanting. She hoped that her builders back in Philadelphia might hear of the record that one of their engines had made. Perhaps they would have some large photographs prepared of her, and send them around to various railroad company offices, to be hung on the walls to show the kind of locomotive she was.

Along the road, through to her new home way off in Michigan, the freight and passenger engines stopped their work

to look and bid her good cheer, and more than one of them determined to do her best, for if the road cared so much for one cheerful hard worker like the 17, why should they not all expect the same treatment? One of the oldest and wisest engines remarked,

"Possibly the men running this road do not appreciate what they have done in rewarding the 17 for the service she has rendered, but most of us appreciate the fact that the interest they have shown in her will encourage us all to do our best."

At all the division points she was coaled, watered and given the best stalls in the round-houses, while the wipers and helpers were told to clean and polish her well, and her proud Scott stood about to see that she was properly and kindly treated.

One evening, after a hard day on her freight traveling over a strange part of the road, they came to their new home, and she soon settled down in the strange surroundings.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ATLANTIC LIMITED

ONE bright morning towards the end of a lovely June, railroad men stood on the platform of a Michigan station. Even as they talked and questioned one another if their new train was to be on time, there came a long wailing whistle off in the woods to the west, and soon the 17's sister No. 9 came rushing down the track towards the yellow two-storied station. She shone as only care and attention can make an engine shine, yet was somewhat tired and a trifle dirty after her long, fast run through the swamps and woods over a dusty track.

While she waited impatiently to be uncoupled and run to the round-house for a good day's rest, the 17 champed at her bit, if an engine can champ. Excited and anxious to be on her way, she shot puffs of silver smoke (for she was properly fired) that burst and fluffed out in the clear blue sky. When the 9 had drawn away from the head of the train, the 17 moved slowly back to take her place. Her head brakeman with coupling pin in one hand guided the link with his other, into the gaping jaw of the coupler on the engine, at the exact second. When engine and car came together he jerked back one hand as he let the pin fall from the other. After the slightest possible jar the station man, with a certain twist of the wrist connected the air hose, and turned the black bent handle on the air line that told the 17 that her train was ready.

The railroad men who had come up from Minneapolis to see that all went well, stood or walked about the platform watching what was going on, and listened to what the standing or strolling passengers might be saying as to the splendor of the new train's equipment.

The 17 heard some speak of her own beauty and how dependable she appeared, and she thought that they well might. Behind her was a mail and baggage car. Next came a full baggage with great doors in their sides wide and high enough to take the largest trunk that ever had been made, and such other baggage or express matter as those using the road might bring to her on the great high trucks.

The second class coach, while just as bright and clean and well shaped on the outside, did not compare with the first class coach behind. It was a joy to those who could not afford or did not wish to use the sleepers. The low back seats of the older cars had given place to ones upholstered in dark green plush with high extension backs, that furnished a rest for many tired heads. A few objected that they could not see what was going on in the next seat, but even these admitted that they became less tired when their heads were not bobbing all over the place.

Many spoke of the beautiful ornamental brass lamps that were fastened to the highly varnished oak head linings. At night the car seemed almost palace-like to those who had come from some log cabin in the woods. During the day the sun shone through the tall doubled sashed windows that had taken the place of the small ones with oval tops, in the older equipment. There was surely a feeling of safety when the traveler stepped from one car to another through that wonderful new invention, the Pullman vestibule. Heretofore the passage between the cars had been rather a dangerous business, for it was necessary to step out on the platform, and while grabbing the railing with one hand, to either shut or open a door with the other.

While it had never seemed overly advisable for railroads to say much about collisions, many had known the sensation when two cars came together, and of an intense moment while they waited to see if the car behind was going to jump up on the platform of their own, to come shearing its way through, shaving off the seats and passengers like a razor cuts a beard. Now

all this was a matter of the past, for the large heavy vestibule plates kept the cars in place and made the whole train ride more easily.

While the 17's menu was now a matter of coal, she could not help but enthuse about the dining car that came behind the coach. She had watched the white-jacketed colored waiters moving around inside, and had heard many speak of the road's two new elegant dining cars, and of the wonderful job that the Barney and Smith Company had turned out. This car, the Fair Oaks, was the pride of the road, and had been waiting out in the woods to take its place in the train going over the great Soo River Rapids and into Canada. She was to remain over at this division point every other night, and the railroad men living there felt that she belonged to them, and saw to it that her dark mahogany shone and made a proper setting for the sparkling glass, the white spotless linen, and the shining slender silver that bore on its tapered ends the trade mark of the road.

Next came the sleeper, Minnehaha, built by the same company, down in Dayton, Ohio. She was one of four that had been designed and built for this far off northern railroad. Like the dining car she also was finished in mahogany, with dark green velvet carpets and dull antique finish on her great brass lamps that hung to her tastefully decorated ceilings showing the taste of her designers. There was an air of quiet refinement about the car that was most appealing. Back in the rear end of the car was the wash and smoking room. A great green lounge or settee faced the rear door of the car, and brightly polished nickel basins, and the bulbous-shaped, polished water pumps with their rosewood handled levers, lent an air of quiet expense to the whole room.

While the train was waiting, the townspeople came alongside, and carefully wiped their feet before they climbed on board to inspect the train, starting at the coaches and going through to the end of the train. Due to its magnificence, they now had little to say, but would later on tell their families and their own kind of all they had seen. Others were bragging, and

would brag to those traveling on other roads what their own line had in the way of equipment. And they might ask why a rival road did not have the vestibules on their cars, or question if their cars were equipped with those flat plates that hung between the wheels and over the track, so positioned that in case of derailment they would strike the rails and automatically put on the air brakes. For while wrecks were dangerous and annoying, they were something to be expected and had to be put up with.

When the conductor in his new blue uniform, with its gold buttons and a stripe here and there, set his cap more firmly on his head, raised his voice and called, "All Aboard!" The porter in his suit of gray huddled his passengers as a hen might her brood, as he told them to get on. After a brakeman up ahead had warned the villagers to look out, and after the conductor had given the signal to go ahead, the 17 and her engineer started east with this wonder train.

When those in the sumptuous dining car had finished their frugal breakfast of fruit, oatmeal, perhaps a piece of flaky white fish, maybe a chop or a fine cut of ham, with several turned over eggs, and a few or more buckwheats floating in their bath of golden maple syrup, they would pay their seventy-five cents, and after the more generous had handed a quarter to the clean white-uniformed waiters who had cared for their wants, they went back through the vestibules to their own smoking room in the sleeper. There they could look out on the retreating track, and, between whiffs of blue cigar smoke, speak of what the road had already done for their country, and make many predictions as to what they expected it to accomplish for them in the future. Others told stories, doubtless, of more interest than worth.

On through the woods Scott guided the 17 and his new train, slowing down and nursing his charge where he knew the track was soft or where an elevation of a curve might be too high or too low. Knowing his engine, and his engine knowing him, both with confidence in the other went happily on, up long

grades, slowing more and more as they got to the top. Then with brakes off, and possibly a little steam in the cylinders, they would go plunging and raring down the other side of the hill to get enough momentum to carry them up the next.

Scott, with one hand on the throttle, and the other ever ready to apply the air and make the train ride more smoothly, waited until he knew all were out of the dining car, when the motion would be less felt. Then he opened the 17 out to make up the few minutes they had lost. As they traveled East, the country became drier, the road bed harder, and here and there they passed small farms looking as if they had been adzed or chiselled from the forest, and then on a little north, past the Straits of Mackinac, through the old battle grounds of the Indians. Here the prairie Sioux had journeyed from their wigwams of buffalo hides to drive their stone arrows into the breasts of their hated enemies, the Five Nations of the East, who had canoed and cut trails thither, that they might teach a lesson to those ever troublesome hunters from Minnesota and Dakota country, who had so long held out against all comers.

At times, off in the timber, or nearer at hand, could be seen low flat elevations left by an almost unknown race that had built their mounds from out near the source in Mississippi, down through Wisconsin, Michigan and across the Straits of Mackinac into Ohio, to make us question where they came from, where they went, and who they were.

It's hardly likely that Scott or his engine thought much of such things as they sped across the now more frequent cleared land. On they went until a long continuous low whistle told those nervously waiting at the Sault Ste. Marie that the first Limited was coming and was on time. In fact, she was several minutes ahead of time.

The Canadian Pacific 625 panted at her switch with her Canadian baggage and mail cars, anxious to couple on, to be on her way through Canada to Montreal, Boston and New England. The 17, having uncoupled her own express and baggage cars, watched from her switch as the Canadian engine and her

train pulled out, later to stop at the great drawbridge that crossed the Soo Canal and locks. After the Limited was over, she saw the span opened and a great cumbersome lake freighter slip down the Soo River from Lake Superior into the locks that lowered her to the lower level of the river, so that she might go on East.

Loaded as they were from the iron mines of the Vermillion Range up in Minnesota, or ore from the Marquette district, they appeared more like great homely water bugs than the great commerce carriers they were. With them came the whalebacks from the Jim Hill country, with their barges. They were low down in the water, and with their round blunt bows poking through the water they looked not unlike the great brown hogs. Down in their black holds they bore the flour and grain that moved over the Lakes during the summer, on its way to the seaboard.

CHAPTER XXIV

LIFE

WHEN the newness of handling the Limited wore off, Scott and his 17 fitted their lives into the running of their train. Rain or shine, they waited at their post in the woods to hurry the tourists and vacationists East to old New England, that they might get a breath of the pine-laden air, or fill their lungs with the invigorating salt wind that rolled in from the broad Atlantic. When the schools let out, carloads of teachers taking advantage of special low rates added sleeper after sleeper to the already heavy Limited.

Scott from his seat, kept his eyes on the steam gauge, and urged the fireman Bob to watch the fire more closely as they struggled up the grades. Frequently the 17 drew a long breath when she had delivered her train to her Canadian sisters. She sometimes watched with anxiety the size of the train that they brought over the long bridge, depending on her to deliver it to the engines waiting at the next division point. These sister engines urged her to do her utmost to let them have the train on time, for they said:

"If you do not, we shall be late ourselves, and you can appreciate our feelings when we go rolling into Minneapolis or St. Paul half an hour or so late, to hear those waiting to meet friends at the station look up and say, 'I wonder what's the matter with that engine and her road that they cannot keep their trains on time.'"

It certainly was disagreeable, and made an engine quite ashamed to face some of their one-time friends on the Chicago roads. These engines by the way, were becoming most disagreeable, for they had learned from their own people of east-

ern business the new northern road was taking away from them. The 19 once complained to the 17 that these engines watched for her to come in. "Yes, just yesterday the Milwaukee 362 gave me a scornful look as she said. 'Oh, so you are late again, are you, 19?' "

The 17 had to admit that it was humiliating to have those on the other roads criticize, yet didn't she have something of the same thing herself? Perhaps worse in a way, for as she said:

"You know, 19, if you are held over in St. Paul or Minneapolis for a connecting train from the West you get out late. I'm not saying that it's your fault that you're delayed, nor is it mine, that I cannot make up enough time to run into the Soo on the minute.

"While those C. P. R. engines are very friendly, and in fact quite cordial, I dislike to have them ask, 'Why don't you suggest to your officials, 17, that they get our Canadian Locomotive Works to build engines for you that will put your trains through on time?' "

"How simply absurd," responded the 19. "Don't they know that their engines are largely copied after ours, and that some of the best ones they have were built on this side of the line?"

"Yes, I've told them that very thing, and called their attention to the fact that I run much faster than I should to make up some of the time they have lost on their road."

By fall nearly every passenger engine running east was a nervous wreck, some saying that they were so debilitated, and their nerves had so gone back on them and given them such an attack of indigestion, that their coal did not burn well, and it had become almost impossible for them to handle their trains the way they had at the start.

The first part of the summer the rush of travel had been east, but by the first of September it changed, for all those who had gone off on vacations were now coming back ready to tackle the winter's work. The 17's position became more difficult, for as she explained to the 19, "Those C. P. R.'s are as tired

as we are, and it's seldom that they give us our No. 7 on time. Now that the brake is on the other wheel I've suggested to them that they might intimate to their owners that they get our Baldwins to build them some engines that will allow them to make time."

"That's all right," answered the 19, "but you know, with all the stops we have to make, and our fast running time, it's practically impossible to make up time with the sized trains we're getting. It's gotten so I hate to show my headlight in the St. Paul Union Station, and now that our Western line is doing so well, the Manitoba's have joined the Chicago's, and sniff with contempt as we come in."

"Yes," responded the 17, "but on the whole, we've done well all summer, and now that the rush is over we can begin to enjoy life again."

When the leaves on the maples had begun to redden, birches to golden the woods, and as squirrels put the finishing touches on their winter nests, an extra sleeper or so would be added to the Limited. None of the engines minded this much, for they were taking their boys and girls back to the schools. It was nice to see their young people all fitted out in new apparel from head to foot, to listen as their boys talked of Andover, Exeter and Yale, or perhaps at some time to have a daughter of one of their directors or friends of the road come up alongside and say, "Hello, 17, how are you?" and to watch their sparkling faces as they spoke of Farmington or other schools they were attending.

Few probably knew the feelings of this entire engine family as they hurried over the road at night, and the great care they took of their own children. Oh, how they all hated it when late in the fall the great sheet steel snow plows were bolted on in place of their cowcatchers, and how silly they did feel to go out on the line on one of these soft sunny days, and hear the men on the road say, "What is the use of putting them things on now? We ain't goin' to have no snow," as they looked through the tree tops, "for another three or four weeks."

When they began to light the headlights about six, the engines began to watch the sky themselves, and were hardly surprised one afternoon when a great dull cloud shadowed and dimmed the forest. A freight engine on a siding said to her caboose: "Oh, that's nothing," but the caboose that had been through these winters knew better and replied, "You can't tell; she looked sort of wet to me where you can see her under that there pine."

Later she mumbled out of her cupola, "She's a snowier all right," and thinking of the number of times she had been snowed in, added, "How I do hate winter! Sometimes it isn't so bad when my crew gathers around my red-hot iron stove, and I listen to them talk, and I'll say it gives one sort of a homey feeling at night if the wind isn't howling too bad, to have some of them, if they can catch a few minutes, stretch out on my long seats for a good nap." She ended with, "Well, I told you so, didn't I?"

"That ain't nothing," answered the borrowed engine that had been built in New England, "we ain't got a thing to worry about. Now back where I came from we be the kind that hardly notice a few dribbles of snow like this."

"Maybe," drawled the caboose, "but you wait 'til you've worked out here as long as I have; then you'll hate snow as much as I do. I've always noticed that the first real winter snows start out quiet and friendly before they settle down to make a real business of it. And this one is one of them sort. See, she's beginning to come down now as if telling us she's out to make trouble."

Before long the visiting freighter began to wish that she had one of those sheet steel things on herself, for it began to get very messy under wheel.

The 17, pushing on with her Limited, saw the first few flakes flicker down through the trees to lose themselves in the grass pattern of the forest's floor. As she went on, it became interesting to see a place here and there where the larger flakes were piling themselves where the first ones had found a cold footing. She wondered how the balsams felt as their boughs

bent under their white load, to make a shelter and winter home for the partridges that ran under her green canopy for shelter. It must be rather fun to be a cedar or balsam out here in the white woods during the winter time, for they didn't have to think about being late, about slippery rails and such things as bad coal. All they had to do was nap and listen to what their bird friends talked about. Yet that might get tiresome. But the deer, who lingered at times to get out of the wind and weather, should be most interesting when they told of their escapes from the wolves. Yes, she would like to be a listener for a whole winter. But it certainly would be wearisome if a lot of silly rabbits sat under your boughs all night and talked about such things as rabbits are interested in.

As the snow became deeper, the 17 had to turn her attention to her own work, which was becoming more difficult all the time. In fact the going became so bad that her plow was throwing great white sheets and bundles of snow away from her shoulders as she plunged on.

The next day when she returned the road was all ploughed out, and coming back she heard the conductor tell Scott that he had four deer hunters on board that wanted to get off east of Manistique. Early in the morning when they slowed down and she looked back to her baggage car and saw them unload their tents and equipment, she wondered what could be the fun in going off into those still white woods to chase and kill those lovely forest things that she so delighted to see as they at times ran from her track, or as their keen faces looked out from behind a tree or shrub as she went by. To her it seemed bad enough to railroad in the winter, but to go out as these foolish men did, to sleep in a cold tent on hard icy ground, was beyond her understanding. She was glad she was an engine and not a foolish human.

As the road was now doing a good business, the freights with their plows kept things open so that she rather enjoyed her run and looked forward to Christmas, when her boys and girls would be coming home again.

One morning at the Soo, she noticed that the C. P. R. was

giving her another sleeper, and how she watched a whole troop of her children as they came pouring out of their car. Yes, there they all were: boys who had gone off for the first time now came forward with their heads up, very proud of the long pants that covered their recently stockinged legs. A few of the girls had their hair piled up under the wide-brimmed floppy hats, and the skirts of some had lowered enough to drag in the snow where it was a little deep. How the 17 did wish that she might invite one or two of her favorites, who were casting such longing looks at her Scott, up into the cab. But that would hardly do, for they were now all too spick and span in their coming home clothes. If they rode with her and got all covered with the steamy oily snow mist that formed in her cab, they'd not look at all nice when their mothers and fathers came to meet them at the station.

She knew how they would all be up early in the morning pointing out this and that familiar object on the way, and as they neared home all would begin to fuss and fidget and begin to put on coats and hats. When the 19 or 21 drew into the station they would make a rush and go hurrying down the car steps, huddle for a moment on the platform, and then walk off in an uninterested way, as if they were not much concerned.

First one and then another would forget themselves and go flying off, the girls to throw arms around mothers, to hug them as if they had been away for a lifetime. Soon they would all be hurrying down the platform, the home comers glowing as children do, while the fathers and mothers were asking for baggage checks and looking after the bags that had been forgotten in the rush. Then out into the cold clear air they'd go, half walking or running as they saw their own waiting sleighs with their old drivers or family retainers, who as they saw the children coming, twitched at the bits to make the horses throw up their heads in welcome.

After the Christmas holidays were over, and when the 17 had taken the children back from their vacations, came the short days and the long nights of the winter. Then few of her

people traveled and the engines talked of little except of the heavy freighters that were pounding along attending to their own business.

She counted the days until the sun would melt black cindery pock-marked holes in the snow banks that flanked the road, and watched for the time when the icy waters from the fast disappearing drifts would run from her rivers down to Lake Michigan, when the spotted brook trout would leave their wintering places 'way down in the deepest and darkest holes, to go darting around under the budding trees, perhaps to flash for a second as they jumped at some poor bug who, depending too much on the muscles in his trim legs, or gladdened by the warm sunshine, had overestimated his jumping or hopping ability.

She knew that when her railroad people had passed the word that the trout were biting, enthusiastic fishermen would be out to wade the cold water in the shallow places, ever trying to induce a crafty trout that the bait before his eyes was a creature of the wilds.

Later in the summer when the days and nights were warmer, her men would bring out their sons and daughters. Oh, what fun it was to draw up at some small rivulet in the early morning, and watch them climb down from the high steps of the cars, and to hear them go laughing and shouting as they slid and scrambled down the banks of her rivers, the older girls in their short skirts and long rubber boots. How she glowed at night when she roared by and saw the red light of a camp fire off in the darkness, telling her all was well. But best of all was when she came tearing through the night with her Limited, to have her headlight pick up figures off in the night signalling to her to slow down and take them aboard, and watch them, tired and dirty, as they climbed aboard the sleeper Minnehaha, Mississippi, or a C. P. R. sleeper. When they came out from the cities she used to glance back at her train occasionally, to see the lights in the smoking rooms of the sleepers burning 'way into the night, and think of the stories that were being told

of fish that had and had not been caught. Going home, however, it was different. The lights would be out soon after she had picked up her charges, for they were tired and relished the cool white sheets after the woolly camp blankets that crawled up over their noses. Scott must have known just how they all felt, from the way he nursed her over the road these cool summer nights.

But it was nicest of all to get back to her own round-house, where her engineer's children came to visit her. They would climb up into her cab, ring her bell and play with the polished brass oil cans that Scott would not allow anyone else even to touch.

After years of these pleasant springs, summers and autumns, the 17 began to feel old. She hated to see that her Scott was getting gray. The small boys and girls that used to trudge by his side, holding his hands when he came to his engine in the morning, or stand waving a greeting to him on the platform, were growing up and no longer came to meet him or visit her. The boys and girls she had once taken to their preparatory schools, and then to colleges, were now at work and were able to come out to her only for a Sunday. And how it did hurt when some of the once small girls no longer sent longing glances at her fireman's seat, where they once had sat and kicked her boiler as they rang her bell. More than once she asked herself if they gave her the same friendly look when some attractive young man brought them ahead to see the engine. They indeed made her feel sad and old, for she missed that "Hello, you nice old 17."

CHAPTER XXV

TWILIGHT

AS the years rolled on, the 17 dreaded each winter more than the one before. Having been occupied all her life, she seldom thought of getting old. Now on dismal, wet, soggy nights, with a light train that needed little attention, she wondered why she dwelt more on the past than the future. There did not seem to be the same old bounding spirit in her cylinders, and even her wheels felt tired as they rolled over the better track.

She could not realize the number of years that had passed since she had left the old Baldwin works. Yet she knew her life was surely passing when she looked about her and saw the small villages and farms where the forest had once covered all.

Then there was Scott, who now climbed up on his seat more slowly and did not give her the old opportunities of making up time that he once had. It must be old age that was creeping on and slowing them both down. Yet her years were little in the life of an engine that had been built and cared for the way she had. These thoughts cheered her up until another drab day came along and with it another period of depression. She tried to cheer herself up, thinking that she was not so very old after all, for she knew of Baldwin engines twice her years that were still attending to their trains. But she had to admit that times had changed and with all the improvements that were being made on locomotives, years did not altogether determine their life or value.

She thought of a day years ago at the Soo, when, waiting on her siding for her train from the East, the President and General Manager had strolled up the platform, and as they had stood talking of railroad affairs, a long freight had pulled

in from over the bridge and stopped in front of the station. The 17 still remembered the start she gave, for in the train was a great new mogul bearing her road's name. Almost incredibly, it bore instead of the Baldwin plate the name of another builder. She pondered on what it all meant while she listened to her two officials as they crossed the track and stood in front of the great monster.

She heard the General say: "She looks pretty heavy for our tracks, Overman. You haven't gone too strong on weight, have you?"

She judged from the look on the manager's face that he was not altogether assured himself, yet he answered in his positive way: "Yes, she does look heavy, doesn't she, but as her weight is carried on six drivers instead of on four wheels she should not be any harder on the track than your Baldwins. Then, General, think of what she's going to do for us. We figure that she's going to haul twenty-four cars instead of eighteen that we now handle; which of course means that we will gain six cars on every train, and that three trains will handle an additional eighteen cars, or one train of our present size."

"Yes, A. B. O., your figuring is right, but how much more is it going to cost to run her?"

"I'll admit, General, it'll cost more, but not as much as you may think," and with a more determined voice, "If we're going to make this road pay we've got to do as other progressive roads are doing. Use heavier power."

The 17's heart had dropped at that. Of course he was referring to freight engines, yet if these new freighters were successful, as she felt they would be, it might mean that they would buy heavier passenger engines too. Then what would become of her and all her sisters? She heard her President sigh as he looked back at her. Did he remember that day so long ago when they had discussed her own weight, and was he sorry that his manager had not gone back to his old Baldwin friends for these new engines?

Listening, she heard him say, "Yes, suppose we must, but what about all these fine standard engines we have? They have played their part and certainly have done well by us."

"Oh, don't worry about them, General. There is still plenty of work for them. While our passenger business is still growing they are heavy enough for some time to come." Hesitating a moment, he added, "At least for the East end of the line," and then perhaps as a preliminary warning, "You know our passenger trains west are becoming heavier every day, and if we are to compete with the other western roads we may have to get heavier power. Yet that can wait."

How despondent she was that night on her trip west. It seemed as if she had been warned that her days of happiness with Scott might be coming to an end. The thing for her to do from now on was to get her trains over the road on time. And knowing that Scott had heard what had been said, she felt he intended to show Overman what his engine could still do.

Having waited for their train from the east, they left the Soo late, but made up all of the time before they reached her terminal. How she did hope that her General had noticed what they had done. How relieved she would have been if she had been out in the end of the 99, and heard him say as he consulted his watch:

"About on time, are we not, Mr. Manager?"

"Yes, General, we've made up the lost time."

"Yet you were trying to break the news to me this afternoon in your usual tactful way that we should have to spend more money and get some heavier passenger engines, intimating that my little beauties are getting too light for our trains."

Perhaps the great heart of the manager had a soft spot too for these first engines, and perhaps he remembered the times he had sent them scurrying over the track himself, for he replied:

"Let's not worry about our old Baldwins. I'll see that they are properly cared for and kept on your first trains just as long as it's possible to do so. Will that satisfy you, General?"

He sighed, "Yes, Overman, I suppose it will have to," and as he turned to say good night, "and don't forget that we're getting old too, A. B. O."

From this time on it was not only in the winter, but even in her well loved spring that the 17 remembered that day at the Soo when she had been warned that her days were numbered. The new moguls or the one hundred class so proved their worth that the now old timers were not greatly surprised when their people bought some additional moguls that they had temporarily leased from another line to help them through a rush of business. Their General Manager, always seeking more business, had secured train load after train load of corn that had to be sent east in a hurry.

While all of the first standards were sorry to see these heavier engines come on the road and take their trains, they were not altogether displeased that the last engines bought were from the Brooks Plant at Dunkirk, New York. The first moguls had become so conceited as to the extra six cars they could handle, that it was a relief to have the new two hundreds say:

"Yes, and when are you one hundreds going to take the same number of cars that we do?"

By this time all of the sisters knew that outside of their passenger runs and the light freight runs on branch lines they had little to look forward to. Therefore they were not particularly upset when the word passed along the line that their Manager had gone to still greater lengths and had bought some fearfully heavy consolidation engines. He was working on the basis that every pair of wheels he put under an engine meant more cars on his trains.

The 17 first heard of them at the crossing of the Northwestern near her terminal. She was told by a friend on that road of a new engine the 17's company had on exhibition at the Chicago World's Fair, and of the sensation she was creating. She was a mammoth affair, having compound cylinders that all believed would show a great saving in coal. How

many cars she could handle remained to be seen. The friend had added in a sarcastic voice:

"I'd say she'd haul a lot if paint and gilt lines give an engine a greater power."

Before the summer was over every engine on the road had heard of the new 400 that was coming to them after the fair had closed. When the great machine rolled on to their tracks, all gave a gasp. They spoke to one another of certain low spots, and what all her wheels were going to do to the road in these places. Those running out of Minneapolis asked, what about that long trestle and bridge over the St. Croix, to say nothing of the other wooden bridges she'd have to go over? A cynical 200 said, "Now perhaps they'll put in some new ties; they'll have to if they are going to run that monstrosity over the road."

The old simple or two cylindered engines looked with disfavor on the four cylinders that the new locomotives used. All agreed that the use of the additional steam might be all right, but had they not done well with their two cylinders, and would it not have been advisable to let well enough alone?

The Baldwins, talking among themselves said, "Compounds may be all right," for they had heard that their old shop in Philadelphia was turning them out. Perhaps they were not displeased when after hard service, the four hundreds began to complain that they had aches and pains in their frames, and more than one simple engine, after listening to their symptoms, answered:

"Yes, I think you Americans might have pains, with a great big cylinder on one side, and a smaller one on the other. Of course you're going to twist your frames."

They usually ended in asking if it were not better to haul a smaller number of cars, with a lower cost of maintenance, than to be forever complaining about internal ailments like a lot of old women who have nothing to talk about except the pleasures of ill health.

The coming of these new engines to the road, and the ever-

growing bald spot and the new lines picking their way around Scott's eyes and mouth told the 17 that they were both aging rapidly. She was greatly hurt when she first heard of herself referred to as that "old timer," yet it was said in an endearing way. She felt that all was well while her old friends remained in charge but her spirit fell when she learned that her old President had given up railroading to again go to Washington. However, as her forceful, kindly Vice-President had stepped into his boots she believed that there was little to worry about. Of course he had bought five new ten-wheelers to run passenger trains out West, where she supposed they were needed. But as long as they remained out there she would not allow herself to become overly perturbed.

Her friend the 19, who had met them, said they were not a very cordial lot, and that they had themselves said they did not care very much whether the older engines liked them or not, for they knew that they were better and stronger than any engines out that way, so why should they consider anything a lot of old fossils had to say.

How the 17 wished that the General Manager might hear them. He might put them in their places in a hurry. But probably not, for they were working under a superintendent who demanded work at the lowest possible cost, so even if he did hear such remarks, Mr. Overman might be satisfied to let well enough alone. More than once the 17 had told Scott in the way they had of conversing that she was glad that they were working under her old William, who was now looking after the operation of the east end of the road. While he was firm, he had enlarged his understanding of railroad affairs and men, so that their work, though hard, was most interesting.

'Way out in the woods where she was she did not hear all of the road's gossip, so she was certainly depressed when one of the great ten-wheelers rolled in at the head of the Limited instead of the 19. Did it mean that her time had come? Going east that night she knew that Scott understood her low spirits and he told her as plainly as any engineer could tell his engine

that she must not worry any more than possible, for this 501 was not to remain with them. She belonged out west, where she was needed on the through trains that were running up into Canada on the newly finished line to the coast: she heard him say: "Old lady, it's necessary for them to have heavy power out there. Don't worry, we'll be out here for a long time yet."

Assured, she was forgetting the future and her age, when one late fall, as the trees were turning, she learned that she was to have the now old car 99 that night, and on it was one of her first little girls, who had grown up and was now going off into the great world with her husband. Oh, how old the 17 did feel the next morning, while she wondered if her nice little friend remembered those long past days when she rode on what she said was her own engine. Would she at some stop come hurrying up to the head of the train as she had always done, or would she remain behind talking with the man whose life she had joined?

While the old engine and the old engineer waited to receive the signal to go on the 17 was more sorrowful than she had ever been, for had not one of her own children forgotten her? As she listened and hoped for their signal, so that she might forget the past, she heard a quick step and a once well-known voice:

"Good morning, Mr. Scott, and how are you?" and with a smile in her voice, "and my nice old 17?"

For the first time in months the engine's springs responded as if they were more than dead things. She sent a joyous burst of steam out of her escape as she heard Scott say, "Of course, Miss, we'll be delighted to have you ride with us. Frank," speaking to the fireman, "get right down and help the lady up. Wipe off the seat, too."

"But I'm not a miss any longer, Mr. Scott. I'm a Mrs. now, and here is my husband."

"Glad to meet you sir, and won't you ride up here with your wife?"

"No, I don't think he will, Mr. Engineer. He can go back and smoke in the car while I visit with you and my old engine."

Later, while slipping over the rails, it seemed to the 17 as if she had never been so happy in her life. How short the time did seem until they reached the Soo, and her once little girl stepped down from her seat, and crossing the cab, held out her hand as she said,

"It's been so nice, Mr. Scott, and so like old times I hate to go away," and then, perhaps with a bit of pride in her voice, "but as my husband is waiting, I must go back. Stay here on the road until I get back, won't you, Mr. Scott, and take good care of our engine, too, won't you please?"

Was there a break in his voice when he helped her to the station platform and answered, "I'll try to, Miss?"

The engine and the man watched the train go over the great bridge, and each felt, as they saw the 99 disappear into Canada, that something had gone out of their lives that would never return.

CHAPTER XXVI

FORSAKEN

DURING these passing years the empire builder, having roamed the nearby prairies and extended his wanderings until he reached the foot hills of the Rockies, longed for more freight, and he and his men picked their way across the Cascades to the Pacific. Some likened him to a great constructive spider as he spun more steel threads into his growing railroad web that was ever seeking more business.

When times were hard and the eastern factories had ceased to smear the country with their black smoke, and others earning little had cut down their still low expenses while abusing those that had money for not spending it to better the times, prosperous railroads white leaded more and more engines as they set them behind their round-houses, while hoping for better times and heavier tonnage.

Taking advantage of these depressed periods and the days of low prices, the great builder continued to haul his ever-increasing tonnage from his productive empire, for the farmers continued to plant and harvest the crops that goldened the fields irrespective of the financial condition of the country. People must be fed, and to feed them his road had to haul the grain to the mills and market. It was well for him that it moved at the same rates that were effective when the country boomed. He husbanded his resources when prices were high, and sent his roads coursing over his desired territory when the price of labor was low, and when the steel mills were glad to sell rails at a figure that he felt he might afford.

Branches sprouted from his main trunks like limbs from a tree that they might feed his main arteries. He graded and

railed a line over the undulating prairies of Dakota to the muddy Missouri, and up its valley to the city of Great Falls, where the river threw itself over the ledges in great torrents. From here his Montana Central picked its way through the mountains to Helena and Butte, to lay tribute on the great mineral wealth that was being dug from the mountain fastnesses. Having secured this traffic, he turned his workers to the west and they were soon digging and blasting a road that ran in the valleys and along the rivers, to go twisting through the great defiles and passes of the Rocky Mountains, finally to tunnel its way through the Cascades. All this was done that his trains might go and come from the Puget Sound cities, where he sought the business of the great liners that were delivering the silks and produce that were ever flowing from the far East. While he watched his thousands of cars of grain from the prairies, he counted in the millions the feet of lumber that were being shipped East from the fir-clad forests in the West.

The one thorn that annoyed the flesh of the great builder was the man Overman, who with a great open country before him, projected, like spearheads, branches of his road into the very vitals of Hill's Great Northern. He in turn threatened and built parallel lines that they might save and protect his great graineries.

As the years passed by there had been frequent rumors that the 17 was to lose her manager, who, the rumor frequently reported, was going to the Hill roads. These rumors had been quieted by supposedly first-hand reports that A. B. O. preferred to operate a road as he wished, rather than to take orders from one who was reported to be somewhat arbitrary and domineering as to what should and should not be done in the railroad northwest.

Stories had been printed in the papers that the great man in St. Paul, not being content with his own wigwam, so to speak, had now gone East and secured the great Baltimore and Ohio. Soon the word flashed over the wires from the general office

to every agent and man on the road that their own cherished Overman had resigned and was leaving to run Hill's new road in the East. It seemed to the 17 when she went out that night as if every man on the road besieged her news agent at the station, demanding the latest paper that they might read every word about the loss of their best friend.

Sorrow was on the faces of the old men. Engines wondered on their own accounts what was to happen to them when the man of the firm mouth took hold. Those back in the offices looked off over their now great city that reached 'way out to the nearby green hills. Did they worry too about the loss of their understanding "Old Man"?

He had come as an operation official, and was leaving them, not only as that, but as a traffic expert as well. Along the line of his road from the Canadian boundary and the Missouri River on the west, to the Soo in the east, it was said he appeared to know every farmer, shipper, miller and industry that had traffic which might be shipped on his road. Men running box factories, huge lumber mills and those cutting ties and shipping poles from out in the 17's district were in the habit, when wanting help or advice, to drop into his office and listen while he told them a story or advised what he would do if he were in their places. In fact the 17 had heard it said he had a nose that could smell prospective as well as present business.

His door was always open to the engineers running on the road, and at times peculiar expressions came over the faces of great business men who had been waiting outside, when they saw the engineers ushered into his presence regardless of their own long detention.

It is more than probable that when Scott took the 17 down to the shops to be overhauled that he paid a parting visit to his old friend. Her sojourn in the shops was now a shorter affair, and it was not long before she and Scott were back on their old job, he with a questioning look on his face, she with her boiler—well, everything was in good repair, but did not glow as formerly, with new paint and varnish.

Later in the year when the lakes had closed and their great lumbering vessels were frozen in for the winter, the line to the East became glutted with freight. Heavy western engines that the 17 had never seen before came pulling in with long trains. As conditions became acute passenger engines were at times taken for an extra run that they might lend their now feeble help.

The 17 quaked in her stall and worried when out on the road as to when her time might come. Returning late one night from the Soo, she was watered, coaled and headed out under a new engineer. She saw Scott's grim face as he silently went off to the station to send a telegram to Minneapolis. Next day when she returned, dirty and dusty from her extra trip, he climbed into her cab when no one was around, fingered her throttle, and then, getting down from the seat, lifted the lid of the box and took out his personal belongings. After gathering up his polished brass oil cans, he turned with bent shoulders, and marched across the sand flats and over the long dismal paved street to his home and family. Several days later when she came in with her train she saw him come towards her, dressed not as an engineer but as he had been when she first knew him as the Master Mechanic.

He told her in their own way that he was leaving, that he was again going to have some shops under their Old Man down in Indiana on the B. and O., and ended, "I could not stand it here, old girl, sharing you with someone else, so I'm going."

Later, when the sun was low, she saw him with his family, board the old Minnehaha and go off and out of her life.

Under the new conditions life was less easy, and it was not many months before the Limited, under various engineers began losing time on her division. The 15 came out from the shops thoroughly overhauled, and the 17 was sent out to run a local over an intermediate portion of the road. No one now bragged about her looks, and it seemed that there was little left in life, as she waited around local stations for through passenger and freight trains to pass. Her old friends who had understood

her so well had gone, and she and her sisters were left to bear their burdens alone.

He, her first friend on the road had become a superintendent, and the only pleasure she had left was to watch him pass occasionally in his own little sawed-off car. Was it sadness that made her believe that when she saw him out on the platform that he waved to her, or was it just a passing greeting to some railroad man she did not see? Perhaps some time he would be further advanced and would run their road. Then would he remember his old 17, and again put her in shape and send her back to her old run?

She looked forward to that chance, until the wires again spread the news that her one remaining friend, who had gone East to visit his old manager, was never to return.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE SCALLY

AFTER one visit to the shops the 17 was put on the morning local passenger train from Minneapolis. The work was not very hard, and as the track was good she enjoyed the run, especially in the summer when she handled so many people who took a personal interest not only in her, but also in the train crew, who seemed to know everyone passing up and down the road. Then there were several railroad crossings on her run where she met and talked with friendly, well-disposed engines on the other roads. She became well acquainted with the Omaha's, who told of what was transpiring on their road, of how much business they were doing, and how good the trout fishing was up north. They were very enthusiastic about their fine Twilight Limited that ran between the head of the Lakes and the Twin Cities.

Yet she was more attached to a Baldwin that she frequently met at the St. Paul and Duluth crossing. They were very well acquainted, for both engines had handled local freight and passenger trains on their own line. While waiting for orders the Duluth engine would often tell her all about her road. She said that while her road was not very long, it was the short line between the two great cities on the Mississippi and the head of the Lakes, so that in the spring, summer and fall, it did a tremendous business; in fact, they had all they could handle. Hers was one of the earliest roads out that way.

One day she said confidentially: "I am inclined to believe, 17, that our roads are alike, for from what you have said, it seems the same friendly spirit exists on your line as does on our Scally."

Our engine of the flour road had heard of the St. Paul and Duluth line being termed the Scally, but assuming that this common sounding name was something that her friend might not be overly proud of, had never referred to it. But now as the other engine had mentioned it, she felt it might be proper for her to satisfy her curiosity, so said:

"I've often wondered, Duluth, why your road is referred to as the Scally. While I've frequently tried to work the initials of your name into your nickname, I've been unable to do so."

The Duluth smilingly responded: "No, I imagine not, for our letters have nothing to do with it at all. If you are interested, I'll tell you how it came about."

"Yes, won't you please?"

"Well, 17, that spirit I recently spoke of may have been responsible for it. I wonder if you have ever thought what it means to a road and its business to have every man that's working for it refer to it as his road just as if he owned it?"

"Yes," was the reply, "I have, and know from experience that workers who have that feeling not only get more out of life, but do more for the road. And haven't you found it so that the enthusiastic men who are able to forget themselves in their work are the ones that go on to the bigger jobs? I know we've had several cases of that kind. But forgive my interruption and tell me as you started to, about your nickname."

"You're right, 17, it was not an official, but a switchman that gave us the name Scally."

"That makes it still more interesting," responded the flour engine, "It's of course fine to have appreciative officials, yet we might expect it of them, for they have already started towards a greater future, and they understand what loyalty to a property means. And success is sure if all, from the section hands up feel as you say, that they own the road. But about your name, Scally?"

"Well, 17, Scally talked so much of his road that those working with him began calling our line the Scally in fun. Others picked up the name, and now all of our men use the

term in rather an endearing way, and I'd say from the way our people take care of their engines, that we mean more to them than just something to haul freight and passengers. And we in turn do all possible, even if it be at times disagreeable and dangerous."

"Yes, Scally," with a smile, "all of us Baldwins on our road feel the same. Yet it's what should be expected, for while our folks cannot do all they might for us, they do treat us with kindness and consideration." The 17 ended with, "Well, as there comes the train we've been waiting for, I'll have to be moving. But before going, tell me—are you having any trouble with fires up your way? I've noticed a very smoky look up north for the last few days. It's been so dry out our way that the slashings left by lumbermen and land clearers are apt to get on fire. We've already had one or two small ones out East, yet so far they don't amount to much. But I've been out here long enough to worry."

"I'm worried too," answered the Scally, "for we've got some bad ones right now up around Hinkley, and the smoke is becoming unbearable. Yet no one seems to be particularly perturbed. Of course it's hard for those owning timber, but not so bad on the farmers, for the right kind of fire helps them clear their land. As you say, carelessness about burning slashings and brush is responsible for what's going on now."

"Let's trust," responded the 17, "that we get a good rain that will at least clear the air of this choking smoke."

The Scally replied as she moved off: "Yes, let's hope so, but it's hard to tell, for it's almost impossible to get a glimpse of the sky. Here it is midday, and as dark as late in the afternoon." After looking up her track, "I'd say it is getting worse right now. See that sun—it looks more like an orange than anything else. No, I don't like the looks of things at all."

When the 17 and her local passenger train drew into her division point that night the people were standing around the station talking in an excited way about the raging fire out in Minnesota, of how the wind had come up, and so fanned the

fire that it was getting out of control, and that there had been a frightful loss of life around Hinkley.

She gave a shudder as she remembered her Scally friend was headed that way. Then she worried all night and all of the next day on her way west. She was not so much perturbed about the freight engines, for it was more than probable they were kept out of the fire district. But then she remembered one of the Scally passenger engines that she knew. She must have left Duluth that morning with the passenger and mail train. Her road would put her train through if it were possible, and if they had made the attempt, it was too awful to think of what had probably happened.

All that afternoon the 17's engineer wondered what was the matter with his engine. Every time he gave her a bit of steam she bounded off as if she were on a limited train. He was not altogether satisfied with her behavior, for the smoke was now so thick that it was difficult to see any great distance ahead. As the fires lapped along the right of way, here and there sending out hungry red fingers creeping towards the dry wooden trestles and culverts, he, contrary to her wishes, determined to go slowly, for he did not intend to take any chances, even if he lost time and his engine was in a hurry to learn the news.

As they went on, the smoke became so dense that she was relieved when her fireman lit her headlight. Yet it did little good, for in a few moments the glass became cloudy and dirty. She became worried on her own account, for she knew these forest fires, and felt as those on her train did, that there was no knowing what was going on back in the woods, and that even now their lives might be in danger.

As she stopped at the Duluth crossing station she learned that one of that road's passenger trains had been lost in the fire district. Arriving at Minneapolis, she found that the whole country about Hinkley was ablaze, that hundreds if not thousands had been burned alive, and that the Governor of the state had called for help and special trains were being hurried north.

All that night her own engines and some of the N. P.'s related fire stories and told stories of some of their own narrow escapes.

When the 17 started east the next morning, she expected the worst when they arrived at the Duluth crossing. Would her Scally friend be there, or was she now only a red brown boiler, with bent and twisted bars and pipes, a mere skeleton that that furnace of fire had been unable to entirely destroy? Dispirited and crushed, she dragged around the last curve, and summoning her courage, looked off towards the crossing, dreading what she might see. Her heart bounded, for there was her friend, waiting as if nothing had happened. But what about the passenger engine? Had she come through?

As the 17 drew closer she noticed the blistered paint on the other engine's cab, and when she came to a stop a broken voice moaned,

"It's worse, 17, than anyone could imagine. It's too awful to speak about. The number of people killed—our road has been almost burned out for miles, and it's unbelievable what our engines have gone through. Yet they did their part, and even in our sorrow we're very proud of them. Oh, to think of how much worse it might have been if it had not been for their courage, and that of our men, who went into that inferno to do what they could. I've heard all the details, and I'm so proud of my wonderful sisters that I rejoice more than ever that I'm a Scally and a Baldwin."

In the lowest of voices the 17 responded: "Old friend, try to tell me just what happened."

CHAPTER XXVIII

FIRE

AFTER the 17 had backed onto the siding, the Duluth engine told her in a choked voice what had happened, and then it was only to repeat the words of the passenger engine that had played its part in the rescue work.

She began: "You remember, 17, when we parted the other day we both spoke of forest fires, and of how much smoke we noticed up north. I left a few minutes after you did. Nothing seemed serious until we had gone on for several hours. I, of course, kept my eyes open, but to little effect, for the smoke became thicker and thicker as we went on. In fact, the wind had carried so much smoke down over the track that we hardly knew what was ahead of us.

"After that we met our own passenger train. Being late, its engine had only time to say that the fire was getting worse; that it was, in fact, becoming uncomfortably warm up that way, and that she had heard the agent at Hinkley tell her official, who had his private car on the train, that those coming in from the country stated that the fire was becoming dangerous. Yet no one about the town and station seemed perturbed, and told him, when he asked if they needed help, that they might not, for as they explained, there were fields and open places around the town that seemed more than wide enough to act as a fire break. If the situation became dangerous they would wire him. I'll tell you the rest, 17, when I return, for I've a little work to do now."

The Scally soon returned and resumed:

"As she left, 17, she advised me to go slowly and to pick my way from tie to tie.

"We on our train had been worried, but when assured that

all was well, we went on, knowing that we would be kept advised. But why speak of ourselves, for outside of the smoke and excessive heat that blistered my paint, little happened to us.

"I'd rather tell you of our passenger friend that came down on the train from Duluth, and repeat the story she told. She said outside of some slow running, little occurred, except that the smoke continued to get thicker. In fact, it became so dense that in spots it seemed as if it might be night. Occasionally when the wind swept down and cleared the track it was possible to get a glimpse of what was going on, and the sun looked like a ball of fire that was trying to conceal its face behind a curtain of angry looking clouds of smoke, as if it were unable to bear what was going on behind this tumbling, twisting screen of smoke.

"She told me, 17, how on reaching one station, the white, drawn-faced agent ran out, and moaned to her conductor and engineer that his wire reported that the fire had jumped over the open places and that Hinkley was on fire and hundreds of its people burned. The town was pleading for help and had telegraphed that unless the road sent relief there would be hardly a soul left to tell of what had happened.

"He handed up a hurriedly written message on thin flimsy yellow paper, from the road's officials in St. Paul, advising their train to go on and to do all in their power in the way of rescue. If they were unable to get way through, they were to go as far as possible and then seek such safety as they could.

"The agent had stood with haggard face listening as the conductor asked her engineer if he could go on. Looking down from his already blistered cab, the man ran his hard, determined eyes over her, and nodded with set mouth, as he fingered her throttle, that he was prepared. The conductor grabbed the hand rails of the baggage car as he shouted to the agent, 'Wire them at St. Paul that we're on our way.'

"Then she told me, 17, that she thought she had gone her limit when they were in the smoke district. When she first

actually felt the heat of the half-hidden flames it seemed as if the end had come, but the worst of the run was yet to follow. She said she distinctly remembered the first plunge she made into that stifling smoke. Up till then there had always been a chance to get a breath of cooler air and so gather one's power to go on, but now, feeling the sound track under her drivers, she plunged about the burning roadway.

"She said she would never forget what she saw as she burst through one barrier of smoke. The smaller fires that had edged up to the road in other places, had here become an ugly half-crawling and half-jumping thing that lapped and snapped at the ties, which seemed to be trying to protect themselves in their sandy bed. The fire gnawed at their ends, and on looking down in front of her cowcatcher, as the engineer shot her over the blazing places, she was horrified to see the spikes hardly rooted in their own small furnaces.

"Now for the first time they caught sight of what was before them and appreciated the impossible errand they were on. The fire and flames, having scourged the once green living ground, had gathered in to its stifling bosom the embers and flaming things, that twisted in red agony as they became a part of this awful disaster that roared over the doomed country."

The 17 broke in to say, "It must have been something beyond description, Duluth. Can't you wait just a second or so until I pump up my air pressure, and then go on and tell me what else your brave sister said? I'd say she was a heroine, the way she carried on."

"But 17, you've not heard the worst of it yet. You should hear her, and then you'd realize what she went through."

The listener, unable to contain herself, responded, "My pressure will have to wait. Go on, Duluth, with her story."

"Then, 17, she described the fire. She said the sky was filled with red, smoky, tumbling, twisting clouds that seemed to be consuming themselves, while the currents of heat boiled the air into an explosive mass that hung for a second, as if determining what it should blast next.

"She said it was dreadful to see this awful thing of smoke and heat hesitate, then wrap some wonderful old pine in its blasting arms. She told of one old tree that we all know. It stood off on a little knoll by itself, and during the thunder storms of summer and the whirling blizzards of the winter, all of us used to watch and admire the way this old monarch swayed and bent as she faced the wind that struck and tore in its attempt to uproot and crash her to the ground. There it stood, its dark green outline against this red inferno of heat, as if unafraid, and ready to challenge any creation of the air, while one seething cloud hung suspended as if hesitating whether or not to blast the old tree.

Probably a hatred of life that surged in the red smoky heart of the cloud sent its flaming blood raging as it billowed and threw itself on the old tree. Sister said it seemed as if the old pine bent and swayed as if to escape as the blast turned her millions of little needles and thousands of small branches into torches. Unable to escape, the grand old tree straightened and seemed to battle with the monster that was wrapping her in its red mantle. But it was only a moment before our pine was one mass of flame and ash, and all that was left was the additional fuel and heat she made in this scourge that was running wild in the north country.

"She also told me, 17, of how the fearful fire might gather together two currents of its devouring breath, sending them against each other to become a ghastly mass that tore its way through the lighter smoke clouds and burst over the once green and peaceful country. The forest, harried by the previous heat, seemed ready to give up the pitch and resin from its pine and hemlock to further inflame the terror that exploded as it gathered the once green trees in its red reaching arms.

"But she said the worst of it all were the poor farmers and their families that were caught out in the first district. They had become so accustomed to the smoke as to believe that if the fire became really serious they would have time to hitch up and take their families to a place of safety. They did not real-

ize that the fire, once started, waited for no man and would sweep over this woodland country in great leaps and bounds, searching out every living thing that had not escaped to the water or open spaces.

"She told me, 17, of men working on their farms, who had at noon reassured their wives and told them not to worry, and had told the children to go on with their weeding or other chores. Later as a settler stood with an ax in his hand, pondering on the next tree to fell, he looked up to wonder if the fire might not be getting a trifle worse. After several more swings of his ax he again stopped to look and listen, asking himself what that roaring, growling sound might be. When a few more chips had fallen, he determined to go back home and reassure his folks. Picking up his tools, he started back through the wooded paths, lingering at times to question if he should make a tie of this tree, a pole of that, and cordwood of another.

"Once he stopped, and feeling that the fire was getting closer, he walked more rapidly, and it was not long before he ran breathlessly towards his small log house. He flew to the barn shed and dragged out the springless wagon, shouting to his wife to get the children, as he ran towards the pasture. John and Jake, the two farm horses, sidled up to the fence bars as though something in their equine brains had told them all was not well. When the bars were down, they slipped into their places, and as the straps were being buckled the wife came hurrying with the three excited children and a few of her poor, choice possessions.

"Did any one hear, or did the approaching roar drown out the request the Missis made that she be allowed to go back and get her Domestic sewing machine? She questioned what was to become of Speckle, the gray Plymouth Rock, with her brood of chickens? The father, as he touched up John and Jake and told them to get along, said out of the side of his mouth that Speckle would have to take care of herself and that she might be all right.

"Slapping the end of the reins over the broad butts of the

two horses, as they left the clearing to turn on to the forest road, he took a last look at his home, the small barn, and a cow or so that wandered about, wondering, as they chewed their cud why no one called to them to get out of there. Remembering a bent plowshare he had intended to take to the town blacksmith to be straightened he started to draw up, but as he glanced through the trees he gave a whistle between tightened lips as he saw a red hurdling blast surge through the dense smoke and turn his poor farm and all he possessed into flames.

"Wielding the strap ends, he urged his team into a run, and where their own forest road met the highway, the fires that had been blasting their way along the sides of the road threw themselves together, and went leaping and roaring on, leaving in their wake a few bolts and the tires that were once on the wheels of a springless farm wagon."

CHAPTER XXIX

SAVED

AFTER doing a bit of switching, the Duluth engine returned, and continued as if she had not been away:

"Our Baldwin sister told me all of that, and of the poor wild things that we know along the road. She said at the start that the ducks with their families began to wander away from the nearby banks of their waterways, and before long were just black spots 'way out on the water. You know as well as I do, 17, of the way the deer have been coming in towards the track for the last few days to get away from the smoke, and to get into the open. She said that as the fire raged the does and fawns came to half nibble the lily pads as they looked off over the hills at the red and gray sky, and then the bucks came bounding to the open air spaces on the track. Before long all the wild things of the woods were seeking refuge wherever the swamps, rivers and small lakes had long protecting weed beds or overhanging high banks.

"A soft brown rabbit with long ears down, crouched behind a hassock of moss, trusting that he might be unseen, while there, half in the water, growling and showing his worn, black teeth, was an old bear, not facing those he had so relished at one time, but glowering as he watched the flames that were devouring his old domains.

"She said, 17, it was all so dreadful, that if it had not been for her own excitement and pain, she would never have been able to face what the fire was doing to her own people and her friends of the woods."

"But, Duluth," questioned the 17, "how about her crew? How did they stand it?"

"Well, 17, when they left the small station to go into that inferno, they stood it until, as the engine said, the heat billowed as if it were out of the mouth of hell. First it blistered the front and side of her cab, and then, like an element of destruction it pushed in behind as if to devour her and her devoted men in the cab. Now the bridges and trestles, instead of burning in spots, sent their flames roaring around her wheels, lapping the oil of her bearings into flames, to add further heat to that which eddied about and scorched the men inside.

"Her engineer crouched on his seat with hands on the blistering levers, while his fireman, fearing for him, dragged his coat from his blistering face and went to his chief, who half spoke and half whispered, 'wet yourself in the tank and bring water.' Adding, 'and for heaven's sake hurry, for I cannot stand much more, for I'm about all in.'

"The willing man hurdled over the fuel in the tender, slammed back the thin metal cover and dropped down into what had once been cold water. Now it was warm from the heat that scorched its thin plates. Holding on to the hot iron top with one hand, he plunged under the sloshing water. Then pulling himself out, he filled his pail, and half sliding and half running, burst into the cab to throw his water on the half suffocated man who was driving this one ray of hope on to those that might be left."

It was not her same Duluth friend that was to relate the rest of the story, but the passenger engine herself who had gone into the fire. Several days afterwards, while the flour engine was waiting on her siding at the crossing, a freighter drew in from the north, and there in the train, being taken down to her shops, was the Baldwin that the telegraph wires had made famous from one end of the country to the other.

As the train came to a stop the 17 edged closer, as she said: "Oh, Miss Duluth, you don't know how proud we all are of you. Every locomotive on our road is steaming your praises, and let me tell you that you have made us all proud to wear the plate of your builder. None of us, even today, can under-

stand how you ever got through. From your appearance, it's easy to see that your sister Duluth did not exaggerate when telling of your marvelous rescue."

"Yes," the scorched and blistered engine replied in a broken voice, "it was indeed heartrending, and I shall never be able to forget that awful trip. Oh, those poor people, and those wild things along the way."

"Do try not to think of them, Duluth. But tell me something of your own experience. Wasn't it frightful running over the burnt ties?"

"Not so bad, 17, as the pile and other bridges. I thought the first one that we went over was to be the last."

"Please tell me of it, won't you, Duluth?"

"Well, it was this way, 17. We'd been brushing through the smoke until we got into the fire district, and then we went through fire. At first my wheels seemed to shrink away from the rails and the burning ties but we finally got used to that, and every time we came to a very bad place I'd get more steam and away we'd fly, not knowing what was ahead nor how far we'd get. This went along until, bursting through one barrier of flames and smoke, we caught sight of the pile bridge in front.

"The fire had first edged and then swept up from the dry grassy and woody banks of the small stream to attack the dry piling. As my pony truck went on, it looked as if the piling had in places been burned through. Up to the ties the curling blistering flames had crawled, stopping long enough to set them afire and burn great red gashes that let my wheels down as my weight came on them. Like a dangerous venomous snake, the flames edged out on the platform of the trestle to devour the dry pine, gnawing and snarling at it like a demented thing.

"We were running so fast that we were on the blazing rocking trestle before we could stop, so had to go on. I saw the flames burning the great timber cap pieces as they rapidly ran out on the long wooden stringers. And as we staggered on sparks and burning fragments flew from the timbers about

my wheels, to go smashing down below. Here and there I could feel a timber give way beneath me, but there was enough strength left in those the fire had not reached to carry me over.

"Oh, it's a horrible feeling to have your bridge give and crunch under your wheels, knowing all the time that if your flanges do not hug the quivering and giving rail you'll go off the track and wreck all. But we did get through, and when it seemed as if we could go on no further, we saw, way off up the track in the suffocating smoke, a waving figure. Believing it might be a deer, I wanted to slow down, but that was no time to consider the wild things, so on we went.

"Coming closer we slowed down, and soon discovered that the figure there on the track was a man with his wet coat drawn about his head. He crawled up into our furnace-like cab and told us that just beyond the men had gathered together the women and children in a low wet spot where they had managed to survive. Many times they had given up hope, expecting the fire to sweep down and exterminate them all.

"Well, 17, we pulled up to where they were, and as we came to a stop on the fiery ties, the men there, and those on our train, hurried the women and children into the smoking and blistered cars.

"Then they asked what was to be done, for they could not go on, as a blanket of fire surged in front that would never allow them to pass. Behind were the burning bridges and the country that was breaking into flames. There was no hope ahead and hardly a chance behind, but this they determined to take, so while the conductor stood on the platform of the rear car, men carried water from the tender to keep the engineer in his place.

"Back we went at a dangerous speed, the bridges and trestles quivering and quaking as they sent their flames of destruction against the train. Now the country we were backing into seemed to attempt to rival the inferno we had left. Those in charge did their best to cheer on the rest, all believing the end was near. Finally, unable to go farther, we drew up near

a swamp, and like the wild things of the forest, sought safety in the water and mud. I halted at a bridge that was already beginning to smoke as they hurried from the train to take the one remaining chance. All that awful afternoon and dreadful night, these men and their women and children, half submerged in the water and mud, kept themselves alive under the water soaked coats and clothes that the strongest men kept over their heads and shoulders.

"Down in St. Paul the officials had received the word that my train had gone on its rescue mission. Their stern mouths and hardened eyes told what they were going through as the hours passed and no word drifted back as to what had happened. The agents north wired they knew nothing of the rescue train, while those south of the fire telegraphed that nothing had been heard of the train since it had left hours before, and that there was little doubt but that it had been caught and all on it destroyed.

"Then came the rumors that there had been hundreds if not thousands of men, women and children burned to death in the towns and woods, and that medical and other help must be had or it would be impossible to save the hundreds that were entirely dependent on the railroads. They begged for trains, doctors, nurses and supplies.

"While the telegraph told them that help was being rushed, the operators at their phones hunted down the doctors, and in tense voices said that matters of life and death were in their hands. A train stood waiting them at the station. Nurses at their hospitals slipped their dark cloaks over their light dresses and in hired and borrowed buggies and rigs went galloping down the street, that they might be in time. Wagons hurried from store to store gathering in those things that must be had if the people up north were to be saved.

"Another small Baldwin stood panting in the station, waiting and waiting for those who were to save her people. Soon they came, the baggage was loaded, and then off into the dark smoky night went the small eight-wheeler, with her rescue train, As she flew by the small stations, agents ran out, waved that

all was well, and then turned back to their tables to tap out to those up in the fire district that the special was on her way, and burning up the rails.

"The sun came up through the sullen sky, as the rescue train pushed on up the road. It made its way to where our people, grasped from the hands of death, heard the whistle down the track and knew that the railroaders had again proved the fiber of which they are made. After caring for those in the swamps and waters, the train again slowly worked its way north, as I limped back slowly to safety, taking many people on my train.

"The rescue train hurried north, to find hundreds of black and burned bodies and destroyed towns; and they learned from a few that escaped, of the horror of the dreadful death that had overtaken those unable to get away. The only thing that anyone wished to remember was the train and its small engine that had gone through the fire to rescue the imperilled people, to save those whose ashes would otherwise have helped whiten the burned over country, and they never will forget the engine and crew that saved them, nor the rescue train that later brought medical aid and food."

She ended her story as her train took her south to the shops.

Years afterwards, an old Duluth engine, in speaking to a Northern Pacific ten-wheeler said, "You ten-wheelers that have taken on our job since your road bought us, seem to wonder why some of the old people up on the road still speak with affection of their old Scally Baldwins. Ask them some time about the Hinkley fire, and then perhaps you'll understand the part we played in their lives, and why they still remember us."

CHAPTER XXX

"THAT 17"

TWENTY-FIVE years is a long time in the life of a railroad, whether it applies to man or equipment. How could a thoughtful engine like the 17 that had loved and watched her road grow, help but appreciate the fact that she was rapidly approaching the long last grade that has but one ending, if in fact she were not on it already. Where were all those young aggressive men that had once been so much of her life? It did not seem possible when she went to the shops that the bent shouldered, tired-eyed men who still worked at their benches were the ones who had once boasted of her and their work. Perhaps some who had aged more than the rest now had an easier job off in some corner doing work that did not demand the close precision that they had once been able to apply. It always saddened her to glance around and see her old companions stop and look out of their windows as if they too remembered the past and knew as she did that they were rapidly becoming the last of those who had built the road.

When she had come to them she was about the finest thing on wheels. Now she had to accept the fact that she was too light for the work, and unlike the men who had gone upward and onward, she was unable to grow and do more and more work as they had.

The same thing was happening to the poor brown freight cars that she had handled and nursed in the early days. The first forty thousand capacity freight cars that the road had purchased had either been turned into work cars, where they rested off on the siding, or had been melted down into the iron and steel from which they had started. The fifty thousand

capacities had taken their places, and now the great sixties that all had expected to revolutionize the railroad business, were being handled on light trains or so placed that the steel underframed forty tonners would not mash or pull them apart.

Oh, how different it was from the past when she almost boasted of having handled twenty of her little friends. As the old engines used to remark to one another, those were the real days of railroading. One might remark, "Do you remember, 17, before we had automatic couplers, and the way we used to take off men's hands and fingers?"

"Sure I do," was the response, "and how you could tell from a man's hands whether he was a railroader or not." Then she added, "Yes, the old days were hard ones. Do you recall, 40, the way we used to start out, never knowing how long we would be out on the road, and of the storms we went through before the days of automatic brakes?"

"I'll say I do," was the response. "And the way our men used to run over the slippery, icy tops of the cars, screwing the brake wheels. If they had not been on their jobs we'd have been in the ditch many more times than we were. Yet I'm glad that I lived when I did, and with the men we had."

At times while some of the heavy newcomers half listened, the old Baldwins would go on and reminisce and gossip about those of their own age. About the 20 and how she had never changed: of the 15 and the way they used to joke with her about spots on her headlight.

This interested a waiting prairie type passenger engine, and she wanted to know about the 15 and her spots.

The 17, who had mentioned the topic, responded, "Oh, it's just one of the old yarns we had about that engine when she first came out. She hadn't been on the road long before we all got on to the fact that she had a peculiar way of slowing down in a hurry during the nights. Once when asked why she did it, she replied that she believed in being on the safe side, and did not intend to run into any obstructions. Then we found out that when a leaf or even a butterfly became flattened

and pasted on her headlight, it cast a great shadow on the track. Being rather a timid or perhaps temperamental machine, she always took the shadow for the substance."

The Prairie, having seen something of life, replied, "Not unlike a great many men I've known, who pay more attention to a shadow than they do the real thing. Yes, I'd say that often shadows prevent many men from attempting really important work."

While her old friends were about, the 17 was rather optimistic regarding the future, but as they one by one left for their work on light or mixed freight and passenger trains on branch lines, she felt depressed and forlorn as if she had been deserted. Under these conditions it was natural that she should wonder about her future and what the policy of the road was to be. As a matter of efficiency, did they intend to get the remaining miles out of her without the expenditure of more than running repairs?

She was broadminded enough to appreciate the fact that she was not as economical as the more modern engines, and that she burned more coal, and there was no doubt in her mind that the proposed new arrangement was, from a straight operating standpoint, the proper one. Yet it was hard on an old Baldwin that had many years of future service left if she was properly maintained, to be run off of her wheels that she might be earlier scrapped.

She often wondered if any of her old friends had been left, if they would have arranged to have had her placed on a light passenger run. Yet what difference did it really make whether she was sold for junk now, or if she were to struggle along the rest of her life more or less an outcast, an engine to be looked down upon and ignored by all of the newcomers? Why did not some of the men in charge care enough for the past and the early history of their road to store one of the Baldwins away so that those in the future might see the kind of engines they had when the road was built? In fact, cherish them in the same way the Baltimore and Ohio did their old timers.

If by any chance they did, why should she not be the one, for hadn't she been rather a favorite, and hadn't she made as good a record as any engine on the road? While feeling there was little chance of their forgetting her scrap value, she could not help but think how nice it would be to go down into the future, and what a wonderful time she could have all the rest of her life. She finally determined to think nothing more about it, for it would only make her still more unhappy. There was only one thing to do—forget herself in her work and try to be as cheerful and optimistic as she could until the end. Then if there was a hereafter for the spirits of engines that had gone over the road, as some claimed, she might again some day have her Scott, and be under her old officials.

The day came, as she knew it must, when she was put on a local passenger train, and with the many sorts of engineers running her, it was not long before her tires were badly cut, her grates burned out, and more than a few flues leaking. She was in a condition which in the old days would have sent her to the shops for a general overhauling instead of pounding over the road and tearing out what life she had left.

It was not long before the train dispatcher complained that she was not only losing time herself but was delaying other trains on her division, and he strenuously demanded that his trains be kept on time. The engineers, not caring for the terse remarks they received from him, handled her harder than ever, and when more vigorous comments came over the wire, they finally replied that they had done their best and that unless they had a better engine they would continue to be late. Some of the old men were indignant at the way she was being treated and told of what a wonderful machine she had been in the old days. Yet they preferred to discuss the situation while sitting about in the caboose with the train hands, or with others of their kind in the round-house, rather than go to headquarters.

While it did the 17's heart good to hear her old men rally to her support, it helped little, for she was soon put on a light local freight train that ran over a poorly built branch road

which served some lumber mills off the main line. She soon discovered that the engineers she now had were not nearly as careful and efficient as those on the main line, and as they never got the best conditioned engines, they treated the ones they did get with contempt and little consideration.

Discouraged and run down, she failed to handle her work in a manner either satisfactory to the road or to herself, and so was hardly surprised when she was given half a train and headed towards the shops for the last time, as she expected, unless an unusual amount of rush business should demand that she be reconditioned.

She was glad that they reached the terminal after dark, for on the way down, though she had struggled to be on time, she had forced some of the new big engines to wait until she came along. Most of these had hurled ribald remarks at her, some asking if she was an example of the engines they had built in the early days, and how glad they were to be of the present rather than of the past. Others just sniffed as they took one look at her, as if she were beneath their notice, and it seemed as if everything had come to an end when she heard herself referred to as "that old 17" instead of having them speak of her as the "17," the engine all on the road knew.

CHAPTER XXXI

NO GRADES OR CURVES

THE next morning the 17 found herself off behind the round-house, with other old timers like herself. They all pretended that they did not hear when the newer engines referred to their retreat as the grave yard. Most of these old hard workers declined to admit that they were through with life, and always spoke as if they expected to be taken into the shops almost any day, and put into shape. There were others, who having always depended on their Baldwin name, now bemoaned the fact that they had little to look back upon except a poor reputation.

While the 17, 19 and other optimists still tried to look forward to what they still had to do, the disgruntled ones complained to each other about the way they had been treated, going into long-winded talks as to how, if it had not been for some engineer, dispatcher or some other engine, they might still be out on the road.

All these engines watched the round-house track to see which of their class would join them next. When an old friend would roll in they would do their best to give her a welcome, and speak as if their sandy hot tracks were just a temporary retreat until such a time as they again would be needed. But the hearts of all would fall when a sour looking individual they took for a junk man would come out and estimate how much old iron, steel or brass he might get from each. It certainly was distressing to hear him say,

"She ain't worth much, and it's going to cost a whole lot to break her up." Possibly ending with, "No, I don't guess I want her at the figger you named."

Few of them had little to say, for some time after the man had gone. Then one might comment to another, "Gracious, I'm glad he wasn't talking about me in that cold-blooded way."

This more than likely would bring the answer from one that had been inspected, "Maybe he wasn't referring to you, but there is no telling when he may."

How dreadful it was to stand idly by, when he returned with his tough-looking crew and began to tear one of their old sisters apart. It was heartrending to see them go smashing around with heavy sledges as they turned these once fine locomotives into scrap.

While it was not quite so distressing to have the shopmen come out with their tools, they all knew what it meant. They whispered to each other as they watched to see which sister was to receive attention. If only a connecting bar or some easily replaced part was removed the others that were waiting their turns did their utmost to cheer up the engine that had been robbed, telling her in the most cheerful and casual way that she had nothing to worry about. That it was probable that her bar was only being taken to help out some road engine for a day or so.

But when the shopmen went so far as to remove some heavy vital part, all pretended that they did not see what was going on, and they indeed found it difficult to say anything when the junkers came around and piled broken and torn parts of what had once been an engine into a gondola car that was to take away what was left of some old friend and associate.

The warm summer was not so bad, for when the cool nights came the group of old Baldwins liked to reminisce of their past. One of the three hundreds who had been named for a director who had helped build the road, was with them, and at times complained most bitterly that she had been built so light, and that her cylinders were so small. What good did her her paint and fancy trimmings do her now? The road should have known when it ordered her that the days of small fancy engines were about over. Now, due to their lack of vision, what was to

prevent her from being scrapped with the rest? She generally closed by saying:

"I don't know how I've lasted as long as I have."

At other times when there had been no scrapper or robber of parts around for weeks, she would cheer up and tell of the former gorgeous times she had had in the early days when she had taken out hunting parties in the 99. How she had watched her party go off across the prairie in the early morning with their hunting dogs which ranged out from the carriages and buggies, as they drove through the high stubble fields and tall grass. How interesting it was to count the number of prairie chickens or ducks they unloaded from their rigs when they returned at night.

She would add with a glow of pride: "And I used to watch the sloughs, and when I caught sight of a flock of ducks I'd slow down. Then my people would rush off and shoot just as many of them as they could. Of course few ever gave me credit for finding them or the prairie chickens I flushed almost under my wheels. No, they never thanked me. I suppose they thought it was the engineer who had stopped their train."

More than once when the 17 had spoken of the old round-house back in Martinsburg and the exhibit of old veteran engines stored there, the three hundred would cheer them up and tell them all that there was not the slightest doubt in the world that her visit with them was just a temporary one, for she was being kept for exhibition purposes.

The summer passed and winter came with a rending of hopes that left the remainder of the old engines dispirited and downcast to face the winter that would soon clutch their worn and tired bodies. It sent its icy blasts around the corners of the round-house to first pile up great drifts of smoke-sodden snow against their worn driving wheels, and then reach up against their rusting front ends as if attempting to destroy any courage the poor old things might have left. Some of the more discouraged ones, that faced the future in their dismantled condition, gave up the hope that had carried them on and wished



FRIENDS OF THE "17"



Now the "No. 1"

that they had been of the summer's wreckage. How much easier it would have been than to have to face out the storms and the horrors of a life that clearly told them that they were no longer wanted. Now no one had a word or a kind thought for them as they huddled together and attempted to hide their naked rusting bodies in the snow.

After its usual hesitating attempts, the spring came, bringing with it a warm sun that brought out the green buds and melted the snow that ran off in dirty rivulets, leaving nothing to hide their shame. In the fall these poor deserted things of iron and steel had sought seclusion behind one another. Now there were so few of them left they had to face those whose every glance held scorn and contempt.

On her arrival the 17 had asked for the various members of her family and had learned that some were west and others east. On asking about an old friend that she had neither seen nor heard about, a low voice might answer, "She's gone over the road," all knowing that meant they would never see that engine again.

The 17 had taken it for granted that the 20 was probably one of the first to go, and so was considerably surprised when that engine, dirty and disagreeable as ever, came poking her battered front end in on their tracks. She snapped at the 17, "So you are here, are you? I had assumed that you had gone over the road long ago."

The same kindly 40 that remembered what the 20 had once said to the 17, broke in with, "I can't see why you can't at least keep your headlight clean."

As the 20 was the last engine in, she stood at the head of the line and flattered herself that she held a position of honor on account of her supposed superiority, not realizing that her prominence and condition would probably make her the next one chosen. Later she attempted to evade all questions as to her battered condition, but finally irritated by their questions, she turned on her tormentors, saying:

"On account of others, I have hesitated to mention the con-

dition of my front end and pilot, yet there have been so many suggestive and despicable comments made as to my condition I now feel it necessary to explain my condition in order to protect my good name. I hurl back into their dirty faces the insinuations certain unnamed engines have made." Some smiled as she continued, "You have always known that I have been a credit to the Baldwin name plate, and an asset to the road. To those who have questioned me as to my condition, I will first say it was an inferior piece of oak with a rotted center that caused the condition you see in my bumper beam. It was not dependable and so broke when one of the four hundreds, whose number I hesitate to give, ran into me."

The 40 growled, "So you collided, did you, 20? I sort of guessed you had."

"Collided nothing," was the curt answer. "The 400 did the colliding."

"Maybe so, 20," answered a 600 who was on the turntable just in from her run. "You tell a different story from the one I've heard. They say out on the road that, tiring of standing on a siding waiting for a through freight, you took matters into your own hands, slipped off onto the main track and fortunately for you, the 400 saw you coming in time to slow down so that you were not smashed up any worse than you are."

"It's a lie," snapped the 20.

"I suppose so, and what I've heard of you and your logging train, and the continual trouble you were in."

While the Baldwins were not loath to criticize the 20 themselves, they were not at all inclined to have an engine of another make attack one of their family, so they were glad when the subject of the 20 and her past was dropped.

As another summer passed and a great crop was predicted, those engines which were still whole looked forward to a heavy grain business that might put them back on the road. Still they watched with anxious eyes, fearing that another of their number might be taken before there was a demand for them, all hoping that the next one picked would go to the shop rather

than to the junkdealer, for all knew from what was going on that it would not be long before there would be a vacant grave yard.

One morning the 20, who was in a position to see what was going on, called to them, "Here come the scrappers for you."

The 17's wheels quivered under her brake shoes, for she felt that the other engine referred to her. Her heart gave a bound however, as the junkman and his crew stopped at the 20. Then a switcher coupled on and set her off to a siding where she might be more out of the way. Soon the men who had climbed into her cab were unscrewing her pipes and fittings, while others with heavy sledges smashed at anything they thought they might break.

While they had all disliked the 20 very much, not a word was spoken as the wreckers tore her apart. The 17 sighed as she saw a man smash at the straight stack that her proud sister had so cherished, and when the oak pieces of her cab went tumbling to the ground, she could not help calling out,

"I do hope, 20, that they are not hurting you too much. Be brave, for it can't last long. It will not be long before they are doing the same to us. Then we will all meet again on that long smooth road that has no grades or curves."

A low whine came back from the wreck that had once been the 20. "And I hope your future road will be a rough and rocky one."

CHAPTER XXXII

REBORN

THE other old engines saw the 17 and 19 stiffen and show their old time spirit when they saw the Master Mechanic, with one of his assistants, come through the round-house door and hurry towards them.

The friendly old 40 afterwards said she heard the 17 say, "Be brave, 19, for now that our time has come let us face it the way a Baldwin should approach its end."

As the shop men went carefully over them, both assumed that they were being estimated for their scrap brass, steel and iron value. Yet why should the busy Master Mechanic do this himself? What was the meaning of it all? Both listened as he commented on their various parts, and the other engines became all attention when he said,

"Guess the 17 and 19 are the ones we want. They have both been wonderful engines in their day, and like a number of these old Baldwins, have long years of hard service ahead of them if they are properly kept up. Put the two of them in the shops at once and run them through as quickly as you can, for I'm advised the new road wants to start track laying at once." Then, as if an afterthought, "You need not put any extra frills on them, but see that they are put in good operative condition. You have the proper numbers and names, haven't you?"

It was not long before a switcher coupled them together, and before night they were both off in the end of the shop. It seemed like heaven after that awful place out behind the round-house where they had waited to die. As they left, their old associates called after them wishing them both a happy and

prosperous future, but as soon as the pair were out of sight, more than one forlorn old engine settled down on her tired springs, wishing that she might have been chosen. As night settled down there was little said except when an occasional tired voice murmured, "Oh, I'm so tired."

While the 17 did not occupy her once favored track, she was entirely satisfied. How nice it was to look off in the end of the shops and see some of her old friends that had worked on her when she first came to the road. It seemed to her that they worked a trifle slower than they had then. When several of them walked over to her, she realized that men get old as well as engines, for care, worry and hard work had chiselled lines about their mouths and eyes, as if with the edge of a cold chisel. She afterwards said to the 19: "Their eyes are not as bright as they once were—kind of look as if they needed a coat of varnish."

"Yes," was the answer, "and when they walked off I thought their springs needed toning up."

The 17, after considering the answer, replied, "I'm wondering if it's not old age that has slowed them down, and whether varnish on their eyes and a general tightening up would do them any good." While she hesitated to revive the past, she continued, "I wonder if the old men are treated like old engines: set off on side tracks to wear their hearts away."

"I'm afraid you're right 17, for I've seen some of our men who have gotten old sitting on the station platforms and in old cars, as if they wished, the way we did, that the end might soon come so that they might be no longer ignored, or at least treated with little or no respect. How nice it would be if some new road would search out some of these old workers and start them out on a new life the way they have us. I do wish some one might tell us where we are going and what kind of men we are going to work under."

When the shops closed down, two men coming from their work stopped, the first saying, "There is the old 17 again—it does my tired eyes good to see her here with the 19."

The other responded, "They look pretty light now, don't they Joe, besides these monsters we have nowadays?"

"I'll say they do, but I'll never forget the time when they came from the builders and how proud we all were of them."

John, the other man, replied, "Yes, and we had a right to be, too. And I'll never forget how these little Baldwins helped us build the road. I'm glad that at least two of them have been rescued and that they are to have a new lease of life."

"No gladder than I am. If I were not so old I'd like to go off with the 'old gentleman' on his new road."

The engines heard the other answer, "I would too, but I'm afraid we are both too old to ask him for a job. I'd do it in a minute if I were younger."

As the men walked off the 17 asked the 19, "Who do you suppose the 'old gentleman' is that has bought us, and where do you suppose he intends taking us?"

"Perhaps I can tell you," interrupted a great ten wheeler that was over a pit on the next track. "You two old timers probably remember your first president."

She got no further, for the two Baldwins, almost in the same breath, demanded, "You don't mean that our old General has bought us, do you 605? We thought he had gone to Washington to stay."

The big engine replied, "Yes, he is exactly the one I referred to. And from what I have heard, I imagine that he rather expected to remain in Washington himself."

"Then why didn't he, 605?"

"Not being a politician, I can't say: all I know is that he failed of reelection. Then as he wanted something to do he purchased a great tract of land from the Northern Pacific. As it was some distance from their main line, and they had some doubts as to whether a short branch to it might pay, your old General said he'd build the road himself. Now if I were in the place of you two old timers, I wouldn't worry much about your age, for he's proving that it's not so much the matter of years

that prevents accomplishment. It's the passing of the spirit of doing which is responsible for the lack of accomplishment when men and engines get old."

"Yes, I suppose you are right," answered the 17, "but good spirits hardly go with burnt grates and bad flues."

"Probably so," answered the 605, "but as you two old ladies now have another chance to show what you can do, I'd forget the past and think only of the long peaceful life you have before you. The only thing I'm sorry about is that your new road is to be of more value to the Northern Pacific than it will be to us."

The 19, remembering the past, replied, "Yes, it will be hard to turn business over to an old rival, yet all report that our new connection is not only a considerate, but a most satisfactory road to work with."

There was a note of tartness when the 605 replied: "Yes, there is no doubt about that. Yet I'd suppose that you still retained enough loyalty to your old line to want to serve it rather than a road that has never done a thing for you."

Annoyed, the 17 interrupted: "Perhaps if you ten wheelers had flattened your wheels the way we have waiting to be scrapped, you'd not be so enthusiastic on this matter of loyalty." Desiring to change the subject, she resumed: "As you seem so well posted about our new road, 605, won't you tell us where it is, and how you happen to know all about it?"

Still annoyed that engines of her road did not show the proper regret in leaving their old line, she said, "Why shouldn't I be well posted? I've had the General's car out on our Dakota lines and so have learned what's going on. Furthermore, I would not be surprised one bit if we bought up your new road when it is completed. Then how will you two feel, who have forgotten your old friends in seeking to make new ones?"

Noting the way both her listeners had slumped down on their springs when she had acted the part of a prophet and intimated what their future might be, the big engine felt sorry, and believing that her own road might get more business if

these two old Baldwins went off with a more kindly feeling for their old road, she continued:

"I'm delighted to see that our people put you both into such good shape. But I'm rather sorry to see them take off your straight stacks and put on those flat top diamonds. But I know how relieved you both will feel when you get out in that dry country, for even with the close netting we have in our front ends to catch the sparks, we are always worrying about some small spark that may escape and set the prairies afire. I think at times I'd rather have a diamond stack than to be continually concerned about firing the country. Yet a diamond does not lend itself to one's beauty."

Both of the old engines sighed about their homely stacks, but the 17 asked the 19 if a diamond with a future was not preferable to a straight stack with nothing ahead but the scrap pile.

CHAPTER XXXIII

TOWARDS THE SUNSET

THE old 17 and 19, now the numbers 1 and 2, did feel sad and melancholy as they passed through the old familiar terminal and over the Mississippi River bridge to the new life that awaited them out on the North Dakota prairies. It was hard on them, for few of the modern engines on their old road noticed them as they passed by. On reaching the joint terminal they were held until an ugly, squat switch engine that was drilling about the yards came snuffling from behind a number of brown freight cars, to snatch and push them about as if they were beneath her contempt and hardly worth her consideration. Finally tiring of this, she set them over to the tracks of the other road, to be placed in the train that was to haul them west.

Grieving as men might, who were leaving a business they had built up, both were pleased and surprised when a spick and span N. P. eight wheeler stopped talking about local affairs to call out: "Hello, No. 1, so you and your sister are going west, are you? I'm told you're in a hurry, for some of our engines report that you are badly wanted to help lay track out on your new road. I trust that you may find your work congenial and that you may like the country."

Cheering up, the No. 1 responded, "But isn't it very warm and dusty in the summer and dreadfully cold and disagreeable in the winter? You know, Miss N. P. that we have always worked in a wooded country, so your prairies may seem strange at first."

"Yes, I imagine they will," responded the N. P., "and it's likely that until you get used to the open places you may be somewhat lonely. Our road goes through every kind of coun-

try, and we N. P.'s have at times been all over it. When I returned from our mountain divisions the prairies seemed drear and lonely, but soon one gets to love the great undulating plains."

"I wonder if I will form the same attachment," answered the former 17.

"You'll be different from the rest of us if you do not. At first you'll feel lost and very small. If you do, get in touch with some of us Northern Pacifics, for we always welcome newcomers. Yes, and I'll pass the word on that you are on your way out."

There was a cheerfulness in the No. 1's voice as she responded: "While I cannot see your number, Miss N. P., I'll speak for us both when I thank you for your kindness, and will further say that we shall both take the first occasion to express our appreciation."

Turning to the No. 2 she whispered, "Isn't it nice to receive this cordial welcome from strangers, when some we might have expected to sorrow . . . but why remember?"

"Why indeed," answered the 2, "let the dead past scrap its engines. As to these N. P.'s, I'm not surprised, for in the old days when I ran our Limited out of Minneapolis I knew a number of them quite well, and they were without exception ladies of the most charming personalities. They have always had this reputation of kindness and consideration."

"Life certainly was attractive and worth while in those days when we were on the Limited," replied the 1, "yet we must remember that while efficiency is necessary, it's not at all times agreeable. Now that we are old we possibly cannot appreciate the fact that feelings must be hurt if a great business like a railroad is to pay."

"Suppose you are right, 17, and if we cannot make money for those interested in the road, they have to secure engines that will. Yet it does seem to me that our old men, with their love for their engines, did as much for their property and the country as those that are now so much more efficient."

"Likely so, 19, and perhaps the record the old railroaders made in the way of close affiliation with their own people and those they served gave a momentum to their roads that helped them over many hard spots that had to be crossed before they came into their present condition and prosperity."

"You're right, 17, and I wouldn't be surprised if that momentum that you were speaking of is still carrying some of them along. I'd like your opinion, sister, as to what you think will happen when it no longer exists."

"Your question, 19, is hard to answer. Perhaps they will be like some engines we have known, that lacked spirit and enthusiasm and so died on the grades." Then, after a pause, "We might as well admit that life is hard and the future is what we have to face now."

"That's so, 17, yet you'll have to admit that it's hard on two old timers like ourselves to start life again among strangers."

"Not so hard, sister, as it would have been to remain at that home and go to the junkman. Cheer up—as you told me—life may be pleasurable after all. For our old friend the 40 told me that she heard her old engineer say to another: 'I've asked our old President to give me an engine on his new road, and if he does, I'm going out with him.' 'He'll do it all right,' the other retorted, 'that is, if he is like what he used to be.'"

"Maybe so," answered the 17, "but don't forget that his Superintendent will do the hiring, and that he may want younger men who will be more efficient."

"Yes, 17, but it may interest you to know that the man who is to have charge of running the road was brought up on the old road, and is likely to have the same feeling towards us and the new line that our old timers who trained him had for their roads and workers."

Their talk was interrupted by the engine of their new train, as she started off with them towards North Dakota.

During the night the 17 said, "While I cannot see very

much, we seem to be passing through a most beautiful country, and I'd say it's a joy to travel over this fine track."

As the sun came up they caught their first sight of the prairie that went rolling way off into the beyond. While it was interesting, they did miss their old forests, asking each other if they could ever get used to this great open expanse. Across the Red River of the north they went, on over the prairies, that were now being ploughed and showed green where the wheat was making the fields appear like great velvet carpets. As they journeyed west the road stretched out in front for long straight miles, perhaps later to turn and twist around some great swamp or slough, to go slipping through a dent in the prairies where two green hills shaded with soft lilac from the spring crocuses, might give the road its way west between their slopes. As they became accustomed to the great open country with its splashes of a darker green, where the elms and cottonwoods had found footing in the fertile valleys that had once been dredged by the sluggish dark rivers, both wondered if the country would get the same hold on them as it had on their new N. P. friend.

During their last few hours on the N. P. road they passed many flat cars loaded with ties, and as their train drew into Bismarck, they could see great plows tearing deep furrows in the heavy sod that they rolled off to one side in long windrows. Here and there were teams dragging wheeled scrapers that dumped the broken earth into a fill that started at the edge of the town.

A boxcar that had been most amiable and talkative called back as they slowed down: "There's the beginning of your new terminal, 17. Not much to look at now. But no one can tell these days how big a road may be once it gets rooted. It depends of course on those building it. From the name on your tenders you certainly will be immense if you ever get as long as your name. Well, good bye. I'm bound for the Pacific. Hope you'll like your new life."

And as their mogul switched them off to the connecting

track that crossed the street to what seemed like a ploughed field, she added, "I hope we'll see a good deal of one another for I'm through here every other day, and I know my friend on our freight will be glad to know you too. I'll speak to her the first opportunity I get. I intended to when I passed her this morning. Must have forgotten it, thinking of a box that was warming up on my tender."

Then as she pulled off, she called back: "Here is something to cheer you both up. We've got the best water in the country out here on the Slope, for that's what we call this great valley. You're sure to enjoy it. Well, so long."

CHAPTER XXXIV

INJUNS

THREE men who had stepped out of the green drab two-story house across the road, came over to the two engines. One, a rather dark, lean, nervous looking man said, "They are not very big, are they? Not like what I used to have on the N. P."

"No," a shortish, thick-set man answered, "but they are big enough for us to get started with."

Now the third, a lean, tall one, spoke up. "I suppose you want us to lay track when you get your engines in shape, Chief?"

"Can't until I get an engineer, but I understand Simpson and his fireman will be in on No. 3 tonight."

"Then why not lay some track out from the tie and rail track this afternoon, and so be prepared to start out in earnest in the morning?" The Chief, turning to the short man, "I'd suggest, if you have not, that you'd better arrange to get water from the N. P. until we get our stand pipe in. And how about coal?"

"I've arranged for both water and coal. Now you fellows better get busy, for the General and our new Super will be out almost any time." With a smile, "You've met the General, and as to the man that's going to boss the works, I don't know much about him except he hired me to look after the accounts and the freight business. From the looks of things I'd say there's going to be more accounts than freight to look after."

As the three men saw the N. P. mogul start away, the 17 heard the nervous man shout: "Say, you N. P. fellows, set those two engines over in our yard, will you? How do you

expect us to do anything with those engines on the connection where you have left them? Set them over, won't you, and get them out of our way."

The conductor of the train that had brought them out called back, "Build a fire in one of them and do it yourself."

"Would if our engineer was here, but he isn't."

"Got one, have you?" With a grin, "Well, seeing your engineer is not here, suppose I'll have to oblige you," as he waved for his mogul to come back and finish up her job. Soon she bumped the 17 and 19 over the rough new track and placed them on the two short spurs that were evidently intended to run into a proposed round-house. All that afternoon the two Baldwins interestedly watched the men with their plows and scrapers as they widened out their portion of the new yard. When a train of rails was sent over that afternoon and was pushed down their way a dispirited voice could be heard as one engine said to the other: "Our terminal here is certainly a disappointment. But it can be improved." With a sigh, "Just look at these rails. They can't be over 56 poundsers."

"Yes, they are pretty awful," answered the 19. "Guess the General must have bought them second-hand from the N. P."

The optimistic 17 answered, "Yes, I believe he did. Yet many say that the rails that were rolled many years ago are superior to some of the new ones that are being put down today. If these we are receiving have been in constant use on the Northern Pacific main line for years, they certainly must be strong and safe enough for our new line. Then of course when we build up a great business they will be replaced." With a new hopeful tone in her voice she continued: "Perhaps by then we will be building branches and have use for them again."

"Yes, so we can," replied the 2, as she gave the carload of old rails a sorrowful look. "See that one on top, with the battered end. He must have had a hard but interesting life."

"I'd say I had," answered a very broken voice, through one of his split ends. "Yes, I'd say I had."

"So we have heard you remark," replied the 1. "Suppose you tell us something about it. Did you come from a branch line?"

"Branch line nothing," answered an aggrieved voice. "I'd have you know that I came off of the Yellowstone division, and further that I've been under bigger engines than you'll ever be." He repeated, "Branch line! Huh! Let me tell you two if you were ever on the Yellowstone you'd know what real rail-roading was. I'd say you would."

"Possibly we might if you would explain yourself, rusty top," replied the 1, "and you might tell us how long you were on the Yellowstone."

"Longer than I care to remember. When they put me down men used to remark on my weight and design, and the work I'd do—and I have, too. If you two had been out that way in those old days and had fought your way west the way we did, you might have something worth while to talk about. Them Injuns were something awful."

The 2 replied, "We have had an interesting life too, building a railroad through the woods."

"Woods ain't nothin'," replied the rail, "they don't come raring down on a track the way the Injuns do, and tear you up by the spikes, as the saying is. Guess they never did that to you. What I could tell you about them varmints would scare you painted hussies to death, so I guess I'd better not."

"Don't get timid about alarming us, Mr. Rail. Did them Injuns, as you call them, ever attack you when you first came out?"

"They sure did. All the way from the Big Muddy to my permanent location." Forgetting himself in the way good storytellers have a way of doing, he started to tell the history of his life. "It was this way, ladies: I were rolled back East where the best rails were rolled. 'Course there be no use in me sayin' so, for haven't I proved what a good rail can do? But as I was saying, I were rolled East, was hauled out to the Missouri, same as any rail might be. It were awful when I

got there, fer they dumped me on that cold ground when everything were frizzed up."

While he stopped to get his breath the 1 whispered to the 2, "Isn't his language something dreadful?"

The other engine replied, "Possibly he acquired it back East in the mill that turned him out, but more probably from the section hands he has associated with—he talks section-hand talk."

"Sure I do, and damned proud of it, too. I ain't the kind that gets a big stack the way some I know of do. But as I were sayin', they heaved me out of that there car and near cracked me through. That weren't so bad as when they spiked me to them ties that they friz to the ice in the river. Then they went and run cars over me same as if I were on hard ground. It sure were some thing dreadful to feel that there ice sort of giving and squirming under one, same as sayin' it wouldn't stand fer it and were going to give 'way. Sure, and they ran them cars all winter, but it weren't as bad at the end as it were at the start, fer when a heavy car or engine cracked the ice the water came squirting up same as water will when she's squeezed. 'Course then she'd friz too, so by the time spring came I had thicker ice round me than when I started. And let me tell you two women, when it got warm-like and water began to gather 'round, it were more dreadful than ever, wondering if they were going to leave us there to go off with the ice. I told my fish plate that tied me to the next rail to hang on and I'd do my damndest to hang on to the shore, fer I were a shore rail."

"That must have been a relief to you," said the 17.

"Relief nothing, fer one end of me were on hard ground, and the other were out on the ice. And if it hadn't a-been fer that fish plate I was mentionin' a time back I would of give 'way when them driving wheels of them engines hammered my stummick between the shore and the ice, where it weren't supported.

"When I had give up hoping, they hacked me out of the ice and drug me ashore. I were a mess, covered with mud and

dirt. Did they care? I'd say they didn't. Jest bumped me on a flat and started me west again. It weren't so bad goin' at first fer there weren't so many Injuns there, and where they be a bunch of them, the sodgers we had with us would gallop off and kill jest as many as they could. Sometimes they left a goodish bunch on them wet prairies. T'other times they came back kind of like dogs with their tails draggin'. Them were the times when they had no luck and like as not an Injun might of potted one or two of them. But we weren't worrying much 'bout them. 'Course once or twicet when our sodgers got careless like, they might be a herd of them Injuns that they weren't looking for come yelling and screeching from over a highish hill, and then before they could get shootin' good they might grab a sodger, and before you could say 'hell,' there'd be them Injuns a-raisin' the gent's scalp in their hands waving at us, same as if they were proud of what they done."

"How very interesting," commented the 1.

"Yes, it sure were," answered the rail, "but not so sort of excitin' as when we got in the sure Injun country. Then our folks had to watch their hair night and day. Fer some of them that had been scalped but didn't kick the bucket, said it weren't no fun at all bein' scalped, fer the Injuns never figgered to leave a man alive. 'Course me having no scalp, they sort of left me alone, 'cept them times when they come sneakin' 'round at night and pulled out my spikes and lifted the bolts in my fish plate. Then let me say to you two women, it were something dreadful to be out on them lonely prairies waiting fer a train to come along, all the time knowin' you were going to ditch the whole outfit, and when you did that some of them scalpin' outfits would swoop down and scalp them that weren't killed in some of them wooden cars, that smashed up and burned same as kindlin' wood as soon as they were ditched. It were sort of hard fer a nice friendly rail like me, that weren't to blame at all, to have a fire roarin' 'round, burnin' the nice new ties out from under me."

"Did that happen very often?" queried one of the engines.

"Too damned often. But it was sort of satisfyin' like when

a day or so afterwards a bunch of sodgers would go trottin' off over the hills after them that did the wrecking and scalping. There was something about the way those gents trotted off that give me a fine sort of feelin'. One jest knew from the way them mustaches dripped over their hard mouths that there bunch of Injuns were in fer trouble. 'They sure got it, too, fer them gents would take after them and jest foller on till they catched up. Then they'd—so I was told—go yellin' and hellin' into that there bunch of murderers; and if the devil were there, he sure musta been sore at what were bein' done to his Injuns.

"Yes, engines, but before we got through, we all got to takin' the thing as a sort of matter of course. Fer we were told by them that was spendin' the money that the N. P. had to go through, and they was goin' to see to it that it did, even if they had to bring out the most of the sodgers that had fit in the Civil War. When our sodgers and gents were killed, some said that those who were runnin' the thing chewed their mustaches, told the army folks about it, and the army sent out more men to fight and build.

"But so fer, I ain't told you about the Yellowstone division. It sure were fierce in them early days. They laid me right next to a trestle they'd put over what them that know called a coulee, which be a sort of dent in the hills that the water runs out of when there be some to run. This coulee of mine weren't much to brag about, and I more than once said to my fish plate, 'What damned fools them engineers of ours be to go trestling here. Can't they see that no water is ever a-goin' to pour itself out of here?' Fish was sorter dumb like most fish plates be and hardly more than grunted when I talked to her, but she did sort of allow that maybe they knowed more than they looked to know. 'Course she were more than right, fer they sorta looked that way, as if they weren't knowin' much—least some of 'em did. The rail next to me said they were sure crazy, and how much easier it would be if they'd tear the damn thing out, fer it's hard fer a well meanin' rail to be on firm ground at one end and on giving sort of posts on the other.

"Let me tell you women it takes the right kind of rail to

do the work I were doing. But as I were goin' to say: we were damning that there trestle early one morning after that there passenger train No. 2 had given us an awful pounding. Then my fish plate began to moan. She were always a moaner, so I weren't payin' much attention, but she moaned so loud that there day that I say, 'Fish, what in hell ails you?' She moans back, 'There's something dreadful going to happen. Can't you hear that roaring and tearing back in the hills?'

"She was always hearin' things that were goin' through the track that weren't so, so I told her to mind her bolts. She were so strong about what she were hearin' same as some folks are, that she got me nervous-like, and I went to listenin' myself, and sure as shootin' there was a rumbling. My side rail heard it too. He looked at his bolts and I looked at mine and each of us told the fish plates on both ends to grab on and hold tight fer somethin' were goin' to happen.

"And it sure did. There were a great roar and water came tearin' down that there dry coulee of mine same as if it were a river. When it jest swashed and poured under that trestle it weren't so bad, but when she came tearin' over the top, dropping all sorts of riff-raff that it had gathered, things sure did get distressin'. Not satisfied with her first pour, she kept comin' faster and faster, so that before long she'd dumped so much rubbish she couldn't get through the trestle. Then boilin' 'round she began to dig into the banks. All this time my front plate was moanin', saying, 'Oh rail, what shall I do?' 'Do!' I roared back, 'hold on like hell. If you let go, we're goners.'

"It weren't long before there weren't any trestle or banks, and we were jest hanging on to our next rail as it were hangin' to the next. We were all up in the air by then, with the water grabbin' our ties, tryin' to pull us away. Now all we rails began to sorta cheer up the fish plates, tellin' them to keep their nerves and hold on. They were so busy hangin' on that they'd stopped their groaning, 'cept once in a while one would say, 'I know I'm giving away.' Then we all would give her hell, and she'd keep on hangin'.

"Well, women, this went on fer some time till the water begins to go down, and when she had went, there we were up in the air like a sidewalk—a nice place fer a track to be when it were expectin' a train."

The 1, excited, asked in a quiver: "And did the train come and go crashing into the river, and did the Indians rush down and scalp you all?"

"I'd say it didn't, nor them Injuns neither, fer of course the tracker, who were a good one, found out what that damned dry coulee had done to us and flagged the train. 'Course we were awful nervous that he might not come in time, but then we were purty sure he would, fer our people always did watch out so that there'd be nothin' go wrong.

"Now, like as not sisters, where we be goin', they'll put me in jest such a place, and there won't be no one to tell you two women when you come poundin' along that my fish plate ain't bolted tight, or that my spikes are pullin' out. Then where will you two be, with your proud stacks? Like as not in a ditch with yer wheels in the air, that is, if there be a ditch."

A smothered voice that came from another carload of rails groaned, "Can't you stop yer talkin' fer a few minutes, 'stead of yelling about yer Yellowstone division. I'm tired of it. If I were of a mind, I could tell those two fool engines yer talkin' to something worth while—fer instance, the way we run things out in the mountains where railroadin' sure is railroadin'. Take that day . . ."

"I'm not takin' that day or any day you be mentionin'," retorted the first rail. "I'm hopin', too, that they don't lay you alongside me, no more than I want to be fish-plated to you. Fer you're the kind of rail that never does yer work, and gets us all in bad 'cause you don't hold up right. You're one of them low joint rails that everyone hates."

"Yes, and you old bat end," growled the other rail, "you'd make any train ride rough."

"Sure I do—when I'm next to one like you who's always cussin' a fish plate 'cause she can't hold you up."

CHAPTER XXXV

THE MISSOURI SLOPE

THE new life of the two old engines began early the next morning, when their engineer came hurrying toward the No. 1. As he approached, she gave a sigh of relief, for any engine could tell from his walk that he was an old timer who knew his business. Yes, the 2, or former 19, had been right. He was off the old road, and what joy surged in the 1's old frame as she recognized him as an engineer that she had loved years ago when he took her from her dear Scott. She caught the smile on his face as he climbed into the cab, for he must have known her feelings as he went poking around to see what condition she was in.

Soon the new fireman appeared and she heard him ask, "How do you find her, Mr. Simpson? Is she any good?"

All intense, she heard him reply: "She's not in such very bad shape. They might have done more on her, considering that she was one of the finest engines the Baldwins ever turned out. Yes, Frank, with what we can do for her, she will do her part, don't you worry about that. Now that they are going to need us this morning, let's get a fire in her."

She saw the pair of them go to a pile of old packing boxes, and watched as Frank smashed them into pieces with the coal pick, while Jim, for that was her engineer's name, went picking around the new yard, as he gathered old pieces of fencing, and sad to relate, part of a Northern Pacific grain door. By the time he had returned, whiffs of smoke showed that the No. 1 again had a fire under her boiler. How good that heat did feel, and why didn't they get some hard wood, for the kindling fire Frank had started would soon die out if something was not

done. Jim, evidently reading her thoughts, called down to his fireman:

"Say, Frank, see that nice pile of maple cord wood over across the street by the lumber yard? Why not trot across and get enough sticks to get your fire going?" As his man hesitated he spoke again. "There's no one around, so get a move on."

As soon as the roaring fire had sent bubbles of steam through her water, Jim moved her over to a boxcar of soft coal. With persuasion and abuse, he got three laborers to shovel fuel into her tender, and soon, with a good fire, she was ready to face life again.

She puffed out dark plumes of smoke to tell her new officials, who were coming up the street, that their No. 1 was on the job and ready to go to work. The No. 2, while disappointed that she was not to be the first one out, called cheerily: "I congratulate you, 1, that you are under steam again, and I hope I'll soon be wheeling again myself."

"I'll do my best for you by getting the steel down: then they will need one of us at the front, and the other to haul ties, rails and material."

The traffic official, who was looking after things until the Superintendent came out, spoke to a big, heavy-set man with a pleasant face. "Better get busy, Hold. Where is the brakeman you brought out with you?"

Oh, he's here. Get out from behind me, Tom, and show yourself."

A shrunken man with a broken nose peered from behind. He had a look about him that seemed to say, "While I'm not much to look at, I do know railroading." The Chief Engineer looked at the traffic man, and then they both looked at Hold, while they gave Tom the once over. All smiled, and as the trainmen went off to their work, one official said to the other, "I wonder where the Old Man found that Tom."

Here it might be quite proper to state that the name Old Man was wished on the operating officer of a railroad, regardless of his age.

It seemed to the 1 as if the leaves of time had been turned back. Here she was again, pushing trains of material to the front, that the men might grab and spike the rails down. Yet now it was different, for the work went much faster out in this prairie country. The road ran east a mile or so, to crawl up the banks of a small creek and over a hill, then to follow along another waterway. Here and there when they stopped to take lunch, she could hear, and occasionally see, a small blue-winged teal or a large portly mallard, with his iridescent green trim, hurrying off to the high rushes. He and his wife did a great deal of scurrying about as they quacked and discussed the proper location of a new home, and the 1 was to discover as the summer advanced, that he patrolled the open waters, a lonely old bird.

At one place along the higher banks of Burnt Creek, the No. 1 always watched out as she rolled by, to see how they were coming along. One night as the red setting sun sank into its bed of molten gold and red, she picked out a far off spot, and there was the missus, as the 1 termed her, with her train of small ducklings. How things had changed. Now instead of talking of trains, engines, loads and meeting points, as she had years ago, she was interested in little ducks.

It seemed like old times when she backed over to the N. P. and hooked on to a No. 99, the new private car of her General. She was shocked the first time when he came out. Could this elderly man with white hair be the one that had kept them all on their toes when they were building out in Wisconsin and Michigan? But she could see from the way he stepped down from the car and went hurrying about the place, that he was the same optimistic pusher he had been in the old days. She heard him talk tracks, cuts and fills with his engineer, and the freight situation with his traffic man, and demand information from his Superintendent as to when the track material was to be delivered. He asked if they didn't appreciate the time was flying. And that the road had to be at its first stopping place before the grain that was fast coming along was ready for the

harvest. She waited to hear him say, as he had years ago, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

The first day, she ran them carefully out over the unfinished track, where the engineer had his buggy and two horses that those about termed his "rats," for he boasted that if called on, they could climb a telegraph pole. After helping his President into his decrepit, dusty buggy, the engineer drove off over the partially graded road, to stop here and question the workers as to a borrow pit, and there to demand why more teams were not at work. They made a longer halt at one place where long trains of wheel scrapers were building a fill to cross a narrow flat valley. Here they watched the tall pile driver that dropped its iron hammer on the heads of the piles it was driving down through the mud and dirt. At first they would sink like toothpicks into a cake; then as the ground became harder they seemed to shrink from the blows that finally could drive them no deeper. Nearer the banks a bridge crew was sawing off the bruised tops and putting on great timber cap pieces that were to carry the stringers, ties and rails.

When both men were satisfied that the work was well in hand, they drove on to their own first town. Here the President, possibly tired of the quiet engineer, who was something of a pessimist, climbed down from his rig, to go on in another driven by the man who had charge of selling the land. He, being of a more optimistic nature, preferred to tell of the pleasant things an executive always relishes. Off they drove, where two black lines of wheel tracks crushed their way over the purple crocuses and tall prairie grass, that waved its tops in the summer breeze. On they went, between hills where the buffaloes, the original surveyors, had picked their trails over the rich fertile prairies that were soon to become homes for hundreds who were seeking new farms and new lives.

As they drove on the talk turned largely to subsoils, acres that had been sold at possibly too low a figure, and the price that certain quarter sections especially adapted for the growing of wheat, should bring. At places their way lay next to cut

banks, or sheared off hills where great veins of lignite coal crumbled in a black brownness as the hot sun drew the moisture from their seams.

While the older man pondered how this great mass of coal might be mined and used, it's more than probable the driver was trying to guess what question his superior was going to ask next, and what his reply should be. He had been expecting the usual interrogation, "Do you still regard this as good land, and does it receive enough moisture to produce crops?" For more than one man had remarked that he believed the old General had made a tremendous blunder when he purchased a hundred thousand acres away off in this dry region, where nothing could get enough moisture even to sprout. These men had not been out on the trip that the General had made with some of his men, so did not hear him question the few farmers, some living in sod huts, as to how long they had been in this country, and how much wheat they had raised to the acre last year and the year before, and as many years as they had farmed there. He had also asked exactly how much rain they got.

Later their tired horses toiled along the river highway which slipped along the river banks, up to where a great chunk of a man had built a town that he had named for his friend, the General. King John was his name, for he had lived in this slope country for years, and knew not only every acre in his own domain, but also every farmer and most of those who had occasion to visit the section. He was in dire need of a railroad, and when he got the railroad builder in his clutches, or rather in his buggy, became most optimistic as to what the new line might expect in the way of business.

At times when he visioned long trains of grain, or of the coal buried in the hills, the General might comment, "Interesting if true, John, but what about the wheat if you do not get rain?"

Once when he asked that question, John drove off the road and across the prairie, and said, turning to the General:

"See that squashed in place, General?"

"Yes, John, but what of it?"

"Nothing much, but that's where the buffaloes used to wallow."

"And what's that got to do with the case?"

"Just this, General. In the old days when the buffalo herds covered this country and a rainless summer came on, the herds would always gather up here, for they knew in their great bone heads that here was the country where they were always sure of finding good green grass. The buffaloes are the answer to your question. We living up here know as well as they did that this is as sure a crop country as any."

Cheered up, the General would go back to Minneapolis and exhort and encourage his agents who were down in southern Minnesota and Wisconsin, Iowa, and the old farm country, to sell land, and tell the sons of the old established farmers what the slope country was, and what awaited them.

It was not long before the N. P. began to set over boxcars. Their doors would open and tired faced young men would look out, turn and say to those inside, "Well, here we are at last." Then the Superintendent might drop over from the house across the way, and hardly before they knew it, the No. 1 or 2 had run the settlers and home seekers out to the end of the track.

Here the company's land man, his helpers, and some of those living in the vicinity, would gather about and give the strangers a proper welcome. They might take them to a nearby house or farm, pour out hot coffee, and hand them great slices of cream-colored bread that was made from their own hard wheat. While the newcomers spread the golden butter of the country on the great slabs of bread, their friends who had gone on ahead would unfold the wonders of the slope country. Afterwards all would gather at the siding, and place long planks so that the horses and stock might descend from the box-car prisons. A cheerful dog might come bounding down between the men's legs as they carried perhaps an old bureau that had at one time floated down the Ohio River with a man and his bride to the Iowa country. Now it was pioneering

again with a son or daughter, who were themselves seeking homes in a new Northwest.

Chickens whose great-great-grand parents might have barged their way west through the Erie Canal, cackled or crowed their delight when the sun burst into their black retreat. For even these trivial minded hens seemed to know that their day of deliverance was at hand, and that they would soon be scratching a virgin soil that would produce a rich sustenance that would encourage them to continue their life's work of egging and multiplying their kind. When the wagons had been reassembled, they were loaded and were soon trailing off behind the buggy of the General's land man, as he guided them off over the green carpeted prairie to their newly purchased acres.

The 1 and 2 frequently commented at night on a new house that was going up here, or a new barn that was appearing elsewhere. Now that things were getting straightened out, the Chief Engineer spent a good portion of his time going over his road, or wandering with his two small "rats" and their buggy, out in front, planning and picking the path for the road's future advance. The Superintendent had come, and in a quiet simple way roamed about, suggesting to the others what he thought should be done. He seemed to have a peculiar liking for these two old engines, and when he went out on the road, at times they felt he might be talking to them from his seat on the fireman's side of the cab. Both had looked at the lean face under the floppy Stetson hat, wondering where they had seen that man before. Then when the No. 1 heard her Jim Simpson call the man by name, it flashed over her that the man who was now running the road was one of her old children, yes, the very boy who used to sit in her cab in those old days, and almost ring the clapper out of her bell.

So the enjoyable summer passed. For the two old engines felt they were part of the family, and worked as they had when they first came from Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SUCH WAS LIFE

THE summer was indeed a hot one, even for that country. The prairies were so dried up that the mosquitoes looked like pale wraiths as they attempted to drive their dry brittle drills through the tough hides of the horses and stock that dragged themselves behind the hills, to get away from the scorching heat. The new homesteaders, who had put in their crops, watched their wheat bend tired heads during the days, to freshen up during the night, again to face the heat of the next day undiscouraged. Others, mostly early settlers of a cheerful, optimistic order, and depending largely on the brown and black herds of stock ranging the hills, just scratched the top of the soil deep enough to cover the seed.

If the rain did not come, they felt fairly well satisfied, for they had saved many days' hard work. If it did come, their poor seed gathered any moisture that might be within root length, and after weeks of striving, turned out just about enough grain to make their farmers feel that it might be worth while to try it again the next spring. Possibly to cheer the toilers of the soil, dark rain clouds would gather in the late afternoon. While the farmers from their fields would again look for a prosperous crop, the city or town people might step out into the streets and murmur in profane tones that they hoped it wasn't making for rain.

The railroaders, depending on a crop to give them a tonnage for the next year, studied the darkened heavens with an uncanny yearning. The ever hopeful traffic man and letter writer of the road occasionally wired, and frequently wrote the General that the sky portended rain. Afterwards he might feel

somewhat depressed, for in answer to his cheerful forecasts he was likely to receive comments in both letter and telegraphic form, demanding in pertinent language what had become of his rain on this and that date. At times all would abandon hope, as they watched their business shrivel in the fields.

When rain did come, as it usually did, the parched plants drove the milk up into the heads of the grain, to form the hard, nutritious wheat for which the country was famous.

During the summer the business of the road had once reached such a low ebb that the No. 1 carried on alone. And as she told her idle sister on her return one late afternoon, "It's so hot up on the tops of the hills that I could make steam without fuel. Where there was once water in the creeks, there's not enough now to wet the throat of a long billed snipe, even if he had spunk enough to drill through the cracked, caked mud." The experienced cattle roamed the hills and chewed their cuds as they felt their flanks fill out, for while their fodder was dry, it did its wonders perform.

September found the graineries and sheds and the few small elevators along the road, filled with grain. But as the farmers needed money they shipped wheat out over the new road as fast as it could borrow or steal cars from its friend the N. P. All thrived along the new short line, while both engines came rolling into the small terminal with their trains of wheat. But the lean man's face became more worried, for he appreciated the fact that his year's tonnage was going out in a few weeks. He could not refrain from asking himself and the others what was going to keep them going.

The General said he'd come up and see to it, and he did. He made an arrangement with a nearby farmer, who, having discovered lignite coal in his well, had turned his water supply into a mine. The head of the road agreed with him that nothing could be easier and simpler than for him to load his coal into wagons, and drag it over to the railroad and dump it into their cars. While he admitted that there was not as large a market for lignite as he wished, there did not seem to be any

reason why his bright young men of ability should not build up a greater market than they could fill. All they needed was faith, and if they lacked that, he was still young enough to furnish it.

All went well with the farmer's joint mine and well, except that the heavy fall rains challenged the miners as to their rights in this water reservoir. When the coal had been dragged to the surface, the first wagons so cut up the roads that it was not long before the twenty promised wagons of fuel a day decreased to three or four; and these with their four or six horses, soon ate up any profit there might be in the transaction. Yet faith did win the day, and the road in some unknown way managed to do enough business to pay its cost of operation the first year.

The spring came, bringing with it an influx of new settlers. This naturally rallied the spirits of those on the ground, for in years to come it would mean an increased tonnage of freight. Until then, if these people were properly encouraged, they would ride in the old second-hand combination car that had been secured at a bargain. It rode easily, for the years of service it had rendered had taken out all its stiffness, and it gloried in its new green paint as it trailed behind the small freight. Its baggage compartment was a refuge for those that wished to smoke, and learn the unvarnished truth about the oldest settlers, who had come to the country in the early days, that they might lead a free and untrammelled life.

The 100, for that was the number of the combination, was hardly a thing of joy when the winds blew across the Dakota prairies, for then the snow would drift in about the windows and ventilators, seeking a resting and melting place. In its rear end, that had been properly appointed for ladies and the more genteel traveler, the red-hot cast-iron stove, from its bed of sand, sent its blasts of heat against a wall of winter cold. Those who were fortunate enough to bask in its nearby presence felt their fronts bake as the frigid air attacked their rears. No one except strangers took exception to the road and its equipment, for its own people who had lived out that way, and those that had just arrived, knew how much nicer it was to pay

four cents a mile fare and sit where they could at least get out of the worst winds, than to straggle over the zero prairies, where a blizzard might drop down and put them away in cold storage, until the sun became warm enough to melt the snow and explain their long absence from their own warm lignite stoves.

Then it's probable that there was more real comfort sitting by a Company stove that was fired by others, than to get up in the middle of the night and almost frost one's feet on the icy floors, to tend the inner wants of their own lignite burners, which, besides needing at times midnight or early morning tending, had certain peculiar explosive tendencies, for the gas made hasty action most necessary at times.

Another long friendly summer came, and found the road's engineer and his men on the mine job, digging night and day, down to the great black powder that lay some seventy feet or so below the surface. One day on her way north the No. 1 learned that the diggers had struck coal. The Chief Engineer rushed off, soon to return with a hoisting engine. Then it seemed no time before low sided mining cars went sliding off down the slope, to reappear with loads of the brown coal. Now instead of one car of coal going south, three or four waited at the spur to be switched into the train. The lean faced official made it his business to sit perched on the coal tipple, waiting for one more car of coal, while the road's passengers off across the prairie rattled their teeth in their cold car, condemning such a way of running a railroad. Didn't that man who was running things know that they had the N. P. No. 3 to catch that night? Weren't they to get any consideration? Probably they did, but possibly he was more concerned about a wire he was accustomed to send to the General each night, stating that they had mined and shipped more coal than the previous day.

Before the snow melted the following spring, the word passed that the road was to build seventeen miles further on the next summer, so before any great length of time had elapsed

both engines were rushing up and down the short road, hauling more farm seekers and purchasers in, and taking out stock that had been driven far, that this small friendly road might have the business.

It had been a long time since the two old engines had been so happy, for as they more than once said, "This little road of ours is run in something of the same manner as our old road was in the earlier days."

Once the 1 had said, "I suppose some feel that there is a certain lack of efficiency about the whole thing, for it is run more like a family affair than a railroad."

"And why shouldn't it be," was the answer. "There are only a few men here, and if it can get along without a number of very hard and fast rules, everyone is happier. When they have to put in extra hours they are only too glad to show their appreciation of what is being done to make their work easier."

"Yes, No. 2, take ourselves. We first burned wood, then a high grade of soft coal. Now I'll ask you, when the road found they could save money by burning this lignite stuff we haul, did we object, throw too many sparks, or complain that we could not make steam on it?"

"I'll say we didn't," answered the 1, "and what's more we didn't even object when they went still further and began to feed us that nasty wet watery slack we're burning now."

"Yes, we are glad to do our bit, for our people appreciate the fact that we have feelings, and see to it that our runs are not made any harder than necessary. And furthermore, did our firemen get ugly about shovelling almost twice as much coal as before? I'll say they didn't, but used so much care in feeding the dreadful stuff into us that we have been able to work on it without getting indigestion."

"Don't you think it's interesting," the No. 1 once said to the 2, "the way the people out here feel about our road? Almost as if they owned it."

"Not a bit surprising," answered the other engine. "You

know as well as I do that every chance our officials get they go driving all over the country, visiting the farmers and stock shippers to make more and more friends for the road." She added with a sniff, "That may not be efficiency, but it certainly helps make the road pay."

Only once had the No. 1 complained. She had come down the line one night during a very dry spell, and had said to her sister, "My diamond stack sent sparks out that made me look like a roman candle. I was watching my sparks and catching just as many of them as I could in my netting, but some of them got away from me and settled down on the dry prairie. More than once I looked back to see it on fire. Then I had to back up and make all the crew and passengers go after it with the brooms which the Company supplies so that all may help brush out any starting fire."

Both engines realized this fire danger, and were pleased when the Company hired a sturdy farmer with his strong team of horses, to plow four furrows, all the way from the city to the end of the line, picking a day when the wind was blowing towards the track.

Then something happened that few of the railroaders cared to mention except among themselves. The capable farmer, wishing to do a thorough job and fairly earn his money, deemed it quite necessary and desirable to go plowing through a nice little cemetery, throwing great sections of the prairie sod over the carefully tended graves. To thoroughly complete the job, he did the necessary burning. Some living up the road, and having their dearly loved departed ones so interfered with, came cursing and lamenting. Some were especially annoyed, for perhaps some slightly prejudiced friend might have insinuated that he couldn't see that it made much difference if his dead friend in the cemetery got warmed up a bit, for he was probably getting het up worse where he was now. The road promised to replace the soil and to give the whole cemetery a good seeding down, and everything was

finally forgiven and forgotten, except by the capable farmer, who, noting a deduction on his check, naturally wanted to know why he had been robbed. He was cheerfully informed that as someone had to pay for the cleaning and seeding, he seemed to be the one to do so, for he had been responsible for burning and insulting the dead.

CHAPTER XXXVII

MISS MABEL

THE No. 2 had a bone, or rather a frame feeling, late one night as she saw the No. 1 back into the yard. She was not altogether startled when her downcast sister said in a low, melancholy voice: "I'm afraid that I've gotten into trouble, and that they may want to sell or exchange me for another engine."

"Oh, what have you done, 1, killed someone or wrecked your train? Why were you not more careful? You should have thought about the future, and remembered our past."

"But it was hardly my fault. I did not tell them to back me down from the end of the line. They might have known that something dreadful would happen."

"What did?" demanded the No. 2. "Did you kill someone?"

"Yes, I did. My tender hit a young cow, cut off one of her rear trucks. If I had not properly handled myself, I would have been derailed."

"I think you are unduly worried," replied the other engine. "As you only wrecked a calf, it's more than probable that none of the train crew will mention the subject, and that nothing will be said about it. Even if the matter does come up, I cannot see how you can be held responsible."

"Perhaps not," replied the doleful engine. "I'll try not to become nervous, and as you suggest, forget all about it. Yet I have a feeling that we shall hear more about that heifer than will be agreeable."

As the days passed and nothing was said, both engines en-

tirely forgot the midnight mishap and gave their entire attention to their increasing work.

One warm morning, the sharp-faced Superintendent, up to his ears in work, sat at his desk debating on what was the most important matter that needed his attention, when a scrawny-faced individual with a depleted and chawed mustache appeared at the door. From his expression, it would be hard to state whether he had some ill feeling towards the room, the large roll-top desk, or the thoughtful official who waited to learn why this caller had dropped in.

He was soon informed, for the stranger demanded, "Be you the Superintendent of this here railway?"

"I be," answered the questioned one.

"Then I'm going to tell you just what I think you are."

"That will indeed be most interesting, but from your expression I'd say you do not altogether approve of me."

"I'll say I don't, and don't you go getting funny neither, fer you can't go running your engines foot first, and doing the things you've did. Well, I ain't going to stand fer it. No, I ain't."

The man at the desk looked up in a sympathetic way. "As you seemingly need attention and sympathy, may I ask what I can do for you? Why not sit down here and have a cigar, and tell me what the foot of our engine has done, to make you so angry?"

"I ain't angered. I'm mad as hell."

"Well, tell me. Then perhaps I'll be mad as hell, too. Go on, sit down and tell me."

Looking at the proffered chair as if it might be some sort of trap, the visitor hesitated, until the cigar, a native of the country, was passed to him. Then he settled down.

He glowered across the table. "You know my name, don't you?"

"No, don't believe I do. What is it, and where do you live?"

"None of your damned business," he retorted, as the cigar

began to exert its power. "You know I got a family, too."

"I'll have to admit my ignorance again, but if proper, would like to offer my congratulations."

"I ain't here to be congratulated. I'm here to say, mister, that I'm going to take the law to you."

"Interesting, but what about? Perhaps your family, as you say you have one. . . ."

"Yes, I got a wife, sech as she be. She's got, that is, we both got, a girl, and she's got or did have, a heifer that she were just too fond of fer anything. What you did to her made her mother go on something dreadful."

"The girl's mother or the heifer's mother?"

"Hell, it weren't Ma, it were the cow I was talking about. Well, as I were saying, she, the girl, drove Mabel, that's the heifer, down into our medder. 'Course cow or heifer-like she went wandering down towards that there track of yourn. Then without blowing any whistle or ringing any bell, that engine No. 1 of yourn came backing down. She hit Mabel behind, as she was jumping off. Mabel didn't jump quick enough, so she got one of her back legs cut off. I heard her wailing, calling Ma. . . ."

He was asked, "Her Ma—the cow?"

"No, my Ma. She called Jen, she's our girl, and the three of us went tearing down to the medder to see what were happening, and her Ma——"

"Jen's Ma?" was asked.

"No, the heifer's ma, jined in. It were down there by that place where you digged the dirt to put the track on. It were just something dreadful to look at——"

"What was? The fill?"

Paying no attention, the man continued, "There was poor Mabel a-trying to stand on three legs, bawling her head off, and always falling down and waving that there leg at us to show what you'd did to her."

"But you just said," said the official, "that the No. 1 cut off her leg."

"Well, mister, it were what were left that she was squirting at us. The cow was wailing, too. Ma was excited, like the way she gets when something goes wrong, and Jen was sitting on the grass, weeping and wailing, saying, 'Mabel, oh, my little Mabel, be you hurt awful bad?' I told her to shet up."

"Mabel or Jen?" was asked.

"Jen of course. Then Ma told me to do something, and Mabel—no, it were Jen—she says, 'Pa, can't you wrap it up?'"

The official, with a kindly glance, said, "I'm afraid I'm getting rather confused. Who did Jen want you to wrap up?"

"The heifer, of course. She were getting awful weak by now. What were said seemed sort of good sense, so I grabbed out a piece of my shirt tail, tore it off, before Ma had a chance to stop me. She were wailing now more than ever, fer the shirt rather than fer the heifer, fer she had made the shirt. Then I tried to get hold of Mabel to bind her leg. But she were so scared and excited, fer her ma were calling her all the time to come to her, I couldn't get nigh her. Mister, you'll never know how fast a heifer with only three legs can travel. There I were, running 'round like a hen without a head, trying to help that damned calf, while the three of them kept yelling at me to catch her."

"Who was the third—a stranger that had come to help?"

"No, there were no stranger. There were Ma, Jen, the cow and Mabel herself."

"But that makes four."

"Maybe it does, but it ain't got nothing to do with what I were saying. When I got close enough to Mabel I could see that it weren't no use to try and bind up that leg that was gone. I hunted around and found a diamond willow stick, part of a post you sawed off when you were fencing your road."

The official asked in a casual way, "So the road is fenced up your way?"

"Sure it be. But to get back to what I were saying. Well then, I went trailing after Mabel in earnest, fer knowing that she wouldn't be of any use with three legs, I figgered I better

club her on the head so she wouldn't squirt and suffer more. Once when I got her kind of cornered I got her on the hind leg with the club. That sort of slowed her down. Now when the women saw what I was aiming to do, they started to beller worse than ever. No, you needn't ask, Ma and Jen were beller as loud as the cow.

"Now I were all riled up, and getting close I lammed her on the head. I got her pretty good, fer she sank down on her front legs, all sort of shaking. Then while they kept up their yelling, I kept hammering until Mabel didn't know what it was all about. Then I went back to Ma and Jen, and neither one of them would say a word to me except to tell me that I be a mean, cruel man.

"Now Jen goes around inside the house wailing, 'Oh, what shall I ever do without Mabel, my dear little playmate Mabel,' while Mabel's ma, the cow, goes bawling around as if she'd never have another calf. Now this thing has been going on fer a week, so this morning I asked Ma what I were going to do, fer I couldn't stand it any longer. She says, says she, 'You, Jake, you go down to that railroad and tell them people that they've killed Jen's Mabel and that they've got to pay fer her,' and I'm telling you, mister, right now, that's just what you're going to do."

The official, with a look of anguish, replied, "It's a sad story you have related. Now let's try to find some satisfactory solution to your trouble. First you say the road was fenced at your farm?"

"Yes mister, she be."

"Then how did Mabel happen to get on the track?"

"Must of found a hole in my fence, and went drifting off on to the track, the way cows, heifers and some folks have a way of doing."

"Then," inquired a stern voice, "if your fence had been in proper condition Mabel would not have been wrecked."

"Maybe so, mister."

The official turned on the poor farmer. "How do I know

but what you left that hole in your fence so that you could sell an injured Mabel to us for more than she was worth?"

The expression on the man's face indicated that it might be well for the railroader to probe further as to the reason of the heifer's demise. He continued: "Now you listen to me. You quite freely talk about the law to us—are you ready to have us talk the law to you? Now suppose that I prove that your Mabel was nothing but a wild scrawny young cow, not fit for anything? I have discovered you tried to sell her to a butcher, and when he refused to buy her, you either drove her, or allowed her to go on our track and get killed. While I'm supposing, let me go on and ask what would have happened to you if she had derailed the engine and killed our engineer and fireman? How would the people around here have felt towards you and your Mabel then?"

The man fidgeted, and finally got up, saying, "I guess I better be moving along, mister, fer I've got some hay to cut, but just between two gents the same as we be, don't you think that I were telling you an awful pitiful story, and one that orter be worth at least ten dollars?"

"Not worth a damned cent," was the curt answer.

Having rather expected this visit, the lean-faced official had asked for a report of Mabel's death. Perhaps he smiled a bit when he remembered that he had sold the tough heifer to his hotel keeper for the sum of fifteen dollars. Later when the outcome of the transaction was discussed, his railroad family agreed this was good railroad operation, all except the large conductor Hold, who lost his beaming smile when he was on the carpet to explain why he was backing up in such a hurry on his way south—in fact, why he was backing up at all.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

WINTER

IT was a proud day for the No. 1 and the Chief Engineer, when they took Northern Pacific private cars with their officials, up over their new road. The engineer, an old U. P. man, sat off in his quiet way and listened to his former Chief as he said, "Why can't we build branch lines like this road for the same cost? While you have only a couple of engines and a few men, there is a spirit about the whole thing that is hard to understand. How about it, Mix? What is the reason of it, and how do you do it?"

"It's not hard to understand, Mr. Mac. The whole thing is like a family, with everyone working, as you might say, for the family welfare. It's possible, for we are together every day in the year. And when the old General comes up, he is like a father to us all. Yes," with a quiet smile, "He's a dominating spirit all right, but as we are getting out more coal every day, and at a lower cost than anyone else, he lets our end of the proposition pretty well alone and concentrates on the selling of land. Ask his land man, or old King John, if he is familiar with their work, and what others think of our undertaking, for it's the thing in the whole that makes this little road a money maker."

"Yes," replied the N. P. official, "I've met Old John. He's of that old type that's passing on. What's the last thing about him?"

The traffic man, who was more of a talker, spoke up: "Did you ever hear of his views as to the behavior of some of our farmers, and the methods he used to enforce his rulings?" As the visitor answered in the negative, the speaker went on: "When Mix laid out our road he carelessly ran it through a

farm, and still worse, put a cut through the farmer's back yard. This naturally caused some hard feeling, that made itself more pronounced when the wife felt called on to voice her objections by making ribald remarks at our engine No. 1 as she snorted her penetrating lignite smoke as if in answer to the lady's comments. The situation went on for some time: then, likely feeling that her vocabulary was not strenuous enough for the occasion, the kind old woman developed the unpleasant habit of placing various obstacles on the track; to which our light engines took exception.

"Our Superintendent, having some feeling on the subject, stopped off one day and tried to explain that it was not for the greatest good of all that she continue her pleasant pastime. He was informed in broken English and Scandinavian that if he didn't like it he better put his cut somewhere else, and he in turn told of how severe the law might be to some he might mention.

"His interview had some effect for a time, and we were beginning to forget our lady friend when Tom, one of our brakemen, came in one night, and said as he held a blistered hand, 'I don't give a damn about that Swede woman throwing boiling water on our engine, but when she takes after us the way she has the last day or so, it's time something was did about it. You better tell the Old Man to give us rubber coats and asbestos gloves.'

"Declining to do either, the said Old Man stopped the train one day at the cordial cut, but as he noticed the lady with the pail of hot water in her very capable hands, he motioned to go on.

"At the end of the line he found our general fixer, King John, and explained the whole situation to him, getting his promise to attend to the objectionable lady at once. From that time on, only fierce scowls and pointed remarks welcomed our crews at the aforementioned cut."

"Tell them, Mix," as he turned to his fellow-officer, "of John's interview."

"There is very little to tell. One day when I was driving over the country with John I complained about the bootlegging that was going on in this prohibition state, and the hell it was causing in the mine, and intimated strongly that if the General came up and found out what was going on, he, John, would have something to think over. He knew very well where the stuff was coming from, so drove over and told the provider in Swedish exactly what he thought of such doings. Didn't he know that he was hurting the fair name of his State? Didn't he know too, that if he wanted to sell that section of land of his he'd have to quit selling booze? And didn't he know what would happen if he, John, told the General that they weren't getting more coal because some of John's friends were selling booze to the miners? He told him a few more pertinent things, until he had the criminal grovelling at his feet, for he began to realize the error of his ways, and the crime he was committing against the whole slope country.

"In fact, John made such a good talk he had me thinking of a bottle I had back in the hotel. Yes, merely for medicinal purposes. In fact, I was in such a frame of mind as we drove away, that it seemed to be up to me to help the good work he had started by the elimination of my own medicine, much as I disliked to do so. As we passed over the top of the hill, the King remarked that it be so damned hot and dusty he guessed we better have a drink. So reaching under the seat, he dragged out his own jug, and as he swallowed the fierce hot stuff, proclaimed how much prohibition was doing for the State."

"Yes, Mix," the visitor remarked, "that's interesting, but as the law says, immaterial, and not pertaining to your Scandinavian lady."

"There's not much about that, except that King John paid her a visit and told her that she was quite insane. He knew it, her neighbors knew it, the General knew it too, and he said if she went on throwing hot water, he'd call a meeting of all the knowing ones, and together they'd send her to Jimtown—Jimtown being the insane asylum. Knowing that the King's word

was law, and that if he said she was insane she would go to Jimtown, she decided she would not be insane and go to that spot, even for a winter."

As the special went through a series of cuts and open places, the Northern Pacific men asked how they managed to keep the road open in the winter, for they said, "You have no modern snow fighting equipment, have you?"

"Of course we have," answered the traffic man, "we've got a snow plow we built ourselves, using a pair of old freight trucks to move her about on, and some of your fine old rails on her, to keep her on the tracks. Oh, no, we have little trouble with snow," as he grinned at Mix.

If the No. 1 had heard this casual reference to snow she might have told of her own experience one winter day. There had been a shortage of soft coal at the head of the lakes, as most all of the coal used in the Northwest came up from Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, on the lake boats that had gone east loaded with grain, flour and ore. That year the supply at Duluth and West Superior ran so low that the bins in the small local coal yards out in the Dakota country were practically empty. The winter was colder than usual and heavier snows than customary had tied up the railroads at times, and slowed down movement of what soft coal there was. The consequence was that a great many towns and villages were depending on the mines of their own state to furnish them fuel, calling on the Company to do its best. In fact, they were running night and day.

Mix was looking after the mining, and spending most of his time underground, demanding, persuading, and seeing to it that the miners worked harder and longer in order to increase the output, while the lean-faced man down at the terminal spent his time on the road or at the mine tipple, encouraging the crews who were not altogether in a frame of mind to be encouraged.

The wind that blew over the hundreds of miles of prairie, took the greatest delight in picking up every snow flake, to

deposit banks where they might cause the greatest trouble about the tipple. The excessive cold had frozen the oil in the journals of the freight car. Water seeped from the wet coal in the cars and covered the rails with ice. Wires were coming in saying that the towns and villages were desperate, and that unless something was done people would freeze to death. The Northern Pacific kept telegraphing that they had furnished numbers of empties that day or the day before, and demanded that they be loaded with coal for their towns. Other roads wired in, demanding that coal be diverted from the N. P. that their own towns might not suffer.

The 1 and 2 had been running day and night, and the 1, on her mixed freight and passenger train, would come in hours late. The crew, after switching her train and delivering their loads, would grab a hot cup of coffee and a thick heavy sandwich, and start back with a string of empties. One night in particular, the wind howled more than usual as they worked their way north through the forming drifts. When they finally got to the mine, everything was worse than ever before. A box-car had climbed the track, and its wheels were now frozen in the ice, and until it was put back nothing could be done. The wind eddied with its load of snow, as the almost frozen train crew, and some of the ground men of the mine, hacked with axes and picks at the frozen mass of coal and snow about the wheels. The wrecking frogs slipped on the ice as the freed wheels half climbed and half pushed them out of the way.

Finally they got the rerailers spiked to the ties, and the stubborn freight car was jammed back on the tracks. The loads were pulled out and the empties set in. Meanwhile the snow that had drifted over the Y to the main line had to be bucked out. The thermometer had been dropping, and as the 1 with its train of coal started over the cold prairies that seemed to reach to the arctic, the mercury dropped to thirty below zero. The trainmen were in the cab trying to thaw out their clothes, and warm their almost frozen hands and feet, as the fireman

fed fuel into the roaring firebox, while Simpson sent the No. 1 into the hideous storm that raged outside.

When the firebox door was opened, a red glare lit the inside of the cab, to go flickering outside, where it seemed almost to stagger, as if the storm was a very wall of snow and sand. For the devouring winds not only gathered in the snow, but seemed to search out every grain of sand, as they circled and twisted, forming the whole mass into a hard penetrating blast that tore its way into every crevice of a home or barn, and packed itself into the railroad cuts and low places, to become a hard, almost impassable barrier.

Simpson, knowing the bad places, would tear into a cut, and the jar or almost collision stop would throw all the men off their feet. Not being able to go forward, he would back up for half a mile and make another run, trusting that the weight behind might send the bumping train through the cut or drift. This night railroading over these stormy lands was enough to break a man's spirit, and urge him to throw up the job, but being railroaders, and knowing that delivery of the coal was up to them, they went pounding through the night.

They were well down the line, and were planning how to switch certain cars, when they felt Simpson give the No. 1 more speed, as they crashed harder than before. Hold was thrown half out of the tender and Tom went sailing into a corner, against the long poker and extra shovels that were carried to handle snow. The engine gave another pound and shiver as she broke through the snow barrier, and gaining speed, gave a wrench that told those hanging on that they were off the track.

They waited to see what was going to happen, as the heavily loaded cars kept pushing on, each trying to force the No. 1 in front off the way. As this mass of wickedness ground on, these tense men in the cab held their breath, waiting to see if they were to be killed or mashed under tons of steel, timber and frozen coal. The No. 1, with all her brakes grinding, struggled

to keep her wheels on the embankment as she set shoulders against the oncoming monster that was tearing against her tender. The old Baldwin was winning out, slowly at first, and then more surely, hanging on till finally she brought the surging, plunging train to a halt.

Outside the blizzard wailed and moaned as if bemoaning the fact that the victim had escaped, and when the trainmen jumped outside the ugly wind snarled and shrieked as it blasted snow and sand at the derailed engine. While the men worked under the wheels of the No. 1, trying to place their wrecking frogs, the wind would change for a few minutes, to go off and gather more snow and sand. Then, girding itself for further damage, blinding and smothering it came: again to wrench and tear at the train.

Yet the men accepted this as part of the job, and dug, picked and shovelled away as the grim white horror piled about them. Finally, as if tired, the wind slowed down, and as the cold sun came up across the chill sparkling prairie, there was a long wail as the No. 1's whistle told the anxious waiters that she had once more won her battle, and was coming in with her coal.

CHAPTER XXXIX

DAKOTA DAYS

DURING the next year the road pushed on across the prairie, winding its way along the small streams, until it reached King John's own town. The No. 1 went north with the first train of two coaches (for the road had now bought a former mission or church car, that it had converted into a coach). A series of gondolas with planks across their tops, served as seats, and the red caboose trailed on behind. They rolled over the high trestle to the new green station that stood on the river banks. The King had seen to it that the town had been properly decorated, and waved an enthusiastic welcome from the midst of his own people, and those he had ordered to come in from their prairie homes, that they all might give a proper welcome to the steel friend that had come up from the south, as he said, to create a great city where they then stood.

The town band blared discordant notes through freshly polished brass throats, and the King's own hotel furnished the proper drinks and viands. After the necessary speeches had been delivered commending the builders of the road, and forecasting a remarkable future for the country, the farmers and ranchers drove off towards home. Some of the town folks and reception committee drifted away, to avoid meeting those who had taken advantage of the low excursion rate to come up and collect long overdue bills, or to sell the town's enthusiasts things they felt every prominent citizen of a prosperous community should possess. It might also be stated that these enterprising men of business had relished the drinks and viands, if not the speeches.

The No. 1, forgetting her advancing age, so far lost her

dignity as to add her whistle to the town's band, and during the festivities, she stood at the station ever ready to sound her bell on the slightest pretext. Up here she was far from her polished friends of the Northern Pacific who might criticize, so was unashamed. She had never hesitated to join the joys and sorrows of those that she knew loved the little diamond stack locomotive, that had become a real part of their lives.

She was unlike herself when she rolled into the terminal with her boisterous passengers, who waved a spirited welcome from their cars and gondolas, as they reached their home port. Even her sister, the 2, rather frowned and questioned her behavior, when they talked over the happenings of the day. She remarked in rather a distasteful manner how glad she had been that the No. 1 had come in after dark, and that the N. P.'s had not been around, for what would some of their Baldwin moguls have thought and said if they had been present when she, the No. 1, and her disreputable friends, had almost staggered into the station?

Annoyed, the 1 retorted: "Perhaps, No. 2, if you had been there you might have staggered more than I did. For the alkali water that I syphoned up from Burnt Creek is too foamy to be depended on. I can feel it caking around my flues right now." As her disdainful sister simply listened, she continued, "And as for those N. P.'s—what do I care for them? How do you know but what they have the same kind of time out on their road when no one is about to see them? I've learned a lot about some of their doings, even if you have not. Just take that affair between that passenger engine and——"

She was interrupted with, "I believe if I were in your condition, No. 1, I'd say little more tonight. Take a water softener, and you will feel better in the morning."

"I don't need any water softener, and you need not get sore because they chose me to run the special. I handled the train properly, and we all had a fine time, and that's what we went for, wasn't it? You'd better forget your troubles and go to sleep yourself."

Autumn came, and the future did indeed look rosy for the Nos. 1 and 2. Farmers from far and near drove their cattle and hauled their grain to their stations, while the two small steamboats churned up and down the Missouri doing their bit for their railroad. Now a tall black coal tippie reached up in the sky where the once dark incline reached down into the earth. Electric locomotives were poking around the long dark entries, and dragging loaded mine cars from the dark mine rooms, where electrical drills were boring deep holes in the huge banks of coal. The mining machines, clamped to the roof or walls, were undercutting the vein that the giant powder in their holes might blow down the fuel for the Northwest. While men off in a lighted room delved to see what sustenance the Missus might have packed in their dinner pails, a dull boom might be heard, resounding through the passages as the explosive did its work. Mules nibbling their oats with their long ears half masted, waited to go off into the blackness, where the lamp on a worker's cap blinked like a firefly and told them of a worker shovelling the broken coal into the cars; or to a room where a man on his back or stomach was picking the brown lignite from the top of his own special recess or cave.

While the small towns and villages were sending out short streets like suckers on a tomato plant, people talked and planned the digging of town wells, as their first stores sprouted back and side sheds to care for the increased business.

The Northern Pacific, while watching the 1 and 2 drag in their trains of coal and wheat, began to question if it might not be well to add this small road to their great system. This question became more serious when men with plows and scrapers began tearing up the prairies down toward the south, that the engines' old road might reach up and get a portion of the rich traffic that was flowing from this new road.

Unknown to the two engines, the lean-faced manager had persuaded their General to get the Baldwins to build them a new type of heavy freight engine, designed to burn their own coal.

One fall day, while they were standing near their own small

shed or round-house, commenting on the pleasures of life, and how assured their future seemed, they looked across the way as a long Northern Pacific freight pulled in from the East. The 1, whose eyesight was better, called the 2's attention to a new engine that was being taken West. Then she gave such a gasp that her sister asked what was the matter, and if she was ill. Receiving no immediate answer, she demanded, "What has happened?"

The 1 replied, as if crushed: "If your sight was better, you could see that our name is on that engine. Instead of buying another one of our sisters to help us out, as we supposed our General would, he's bought a new big modern engine." With a sob in her voice, she continued: "Oh, No. 2, it's going to be just the same as it was before, except we are now older and not as well able to face what is coming." They both shivered in the cold wind as the 2 groaned, "Oh, what's to become of us now? There will be no one now who will care to buy us. If we were in better condition, some small road might, but now there are only big roads left, and they have more small engines like us than they know what to do with."

Sorrowfully the No. 1 said, as their new 3 was switched from the train, "Perhaps it's really not as bad as we imagine, No. 2, for you know last winter we were nearly run off our wheels. Now with the increase of grain and general business, the road may have all the three of us can do." Then with a start, she added, "Just look at that!" as they saw a man crawl from the firedoor of the huge firebox that was extended out over what they afterwards learned was a trailing truck.

They shuddered as they thought of what the stranger might accomplish with their coal, for with them, if too much coal was shovelled into their old-fashioned narrow fireboxes, they could not draw a breath through it. On the other hand, if too little was put in, the forced draft from the exhaust would tear a great hole, which wrecked the whole fire and made steaming most difficult until an even fire was burning again. This monster with the wide box could carry just the kind of fire

they had always wished for, and the 1 said to the 2: "While I wish I had the digestive apparatus that the 3 has, it does seem absurd to have a firebox big enough for that man to live in: for it seems he's got a bed in there, and a kerosene stove."

"I'll agree it is absurd, to say the least," answered the other engine, "for a man to keep house in a place like that. Yet what a wonderful opportunity he had to sleep and watch the engine under his care. He's rather a nice looking man, too. Do you suppose by any chance he was with the Baldwins when they built us?"

"Not likely," answered her sister, "He's not old enough to have been there then. Oh, how old it makes me feel to think of how many years have passed since we left the old shops." She ended as engines do, when they are reaching their end, "We've about burned our coal."

The stranger spent a day or so getting the 3 in trim. Then with a lignite fire burning under her boilers, she coupled on to twice the number of empties that either of the two old timers could handle. The 1 met her at the mine as she started southward with a long, heavy train of loaded coal cars, that she handled as easily as the old engines did their small ones.

How it hurt the No. 2 when she was taken from her own stall in the round-house that night, so that the new No. 3 might get as far in as her great length would allow. Her guardian, who had come on from Philadelphia, spent hours puttering around her, and as the No. 1 watched, she was not surprised, for the new engine had so many additional parts that any engineer would certainly have to putter around if he were going to make her run.

If it had not been for her own Simpson she would have been even more discouraged, but she felt somewhat comforted as he fussed about and tightened up the bolts on her rods, that they might feel more comfortable. Frequently he stopped to talk to the Baldwin man as to what was new in the way of engines, and just how the 3 should be handled. Yet each time her man came back as if he were getting old too, and wanted

to be with his old engine. When some exceptional part was pointed out, he would retort quite sharply, "If that engine of yours wears as long as these little standards have, and does as much work as this old 17 has," he corrected himself to say, "the 1, you may have something to brag about."

The kindly and well-disposed stranger answered, "Yes, you are right: the eight wheelers we turned out in the early eighties were about as good as any engines ever built at that time, or even now. But with the present tremendous and growing traffic I'm afraid they have seen their day. Too bad, too: I handled one for a number of years, and I'll never feel the same towards this new heavy power as I did towards our little old eight wheelers."

When the management wanted her Simpson to take out the new 3, she heard him answer, "No, I'll stay with the 1. I know her and she knows me." The engineer of the 2, a younger man, accepted the new Mikado, and another man came out to handle the 2.

For the rest of the summer the No. 1 tried to forget the coming of the 3 and what she might mean to her and her sister. It was not long before the two old engines found the new No. 3 most companionable, for being, as they said to each other, a Baldwin, she did not have the conceited and superior manner of some other builds.

She probably appreciated the fact, too, that the time of small engines was over, and did all she could to make their declining years happy and comfortable. More than once when they came struggling into the mine station with more than they could easily handle, she'd run over and take three or four cars off their load. In these days the younger engines, if they were of the right sort, and most of them were, would go out of their way to be nice to the old folks that had built the roads and created a demand for them. As one of the old timers once said: "It's not so bad to get old when we are respected by these great youngsters that can haul so much more than we can."

Relieved of her too heavy trains, the 1 became more cheer-

ful and contented than she had been since Scott had stepped into the old Minnehaha to go out of her life. Yet on chill dismal days, as she climbed the long slippery grades, she could not forget that her people had bought the big No. 3, and she knew from what had been said that the new engine had performed as well if not better, than expected. Both she and her sister, when melancholy, had remarked, "If our trains were lighter and faster, we would be just what are needed out here. But with these slow mixed trains we are on, there's no reason why heavier engines, like our new sister, should not handle our work at a lower cost."

The 1 at times remembered what the Northern Pacific engine had prophesied as to the open country. Yes, the N. P. had been quite right, for even her own headlight had accustomed itself to the great open sweeps that extended to the dim blue hills, miles and miles away.

How perfectly glorious it was on some Saturday afternoon in the fall, to go slipping off over this prairie land, with only a coach or the red caboose on behind. The prairie chickens, with their hens, that she had seen slip off in the spring, were now back with their flocks of small chicks, as if to show her what they had accomplished during the hot summer months. Tall grasses were waving and bending their brown heads as they edged the great wheat fields that were turning gold, as their hairy heads reached up into the warm air, to harden the soft kernel hiding beneath the once green jackets.

Out on her front end, leaning against her now comfortably warm boiler, might be her traffic manager and the lean man, who, with shotguns in hand, watched out for the prairie chickens who had sought the open places along the track where her pilot had cleared the weeds, and where some of her poor old cars had leaked grain along the road.

At a wave of an arm she'd come to a stop, and watch her two friends as they hurried ahead to where they had seen a prairie hen or cock picking about, or had glimpsed a waving of reeds that told where a hungry family might be scratching for

their supper. Soon there would be a roar, as first one bird and then another catapulted themselves into space, beating the air with short powerful wings, as they strove to escape the leaden death that only speed might avoid.

Then there would be a report from the four barrels of the shotguns, as some of the once live and happy feathered things wavered in the air for a moment before they went tumbling and whirling into a field of golden grain, or down into the tall weeds, where with a broken wing or torn body, they cuddled down in the nearest thicket, that some keen eye or discovering foot might not find them.

Then on again, into the golden glow that a melting sun was pouring over the uplands, and down into the valleys, where a once browned dirty creek now glistened as it crept off to again become dark in its weeds and rushes, to protect some duck and his family, that already knew what the coming of this new railroad might mean.

While the once distant blue-gray hills silhouetted their long dark outlines against the smother of gold and red in the west, it seemed as if a spirit of the prairie land, with the sunset as a palette, was glorifying the world as it touched up the edges of the great fluffy, silver and dark clouds that were forerunners of the night. The No. 1, watching her silver ribbons of rails as they broadened under her wheels, went on her way to the town of coal, stopping only long enough to speak with the No. 3. Then up to the end of the road, where in front of the small station she watched her own men go down to the river banks and board the small stern wheeler which took them off up the river, into the last glows of the sun.

Later when the cool night came and shadowed the land, she would slip off south with a train of grain as the great ball of a moon came up and lit the way through her own valleys. She knew that early Monday morning she'd run up and bring her party back, and even now she knew how they would talk as they sat and stood about her cab. They would repeat the stories that their old river captain had related: how he and his

great steamer *Batchelder* had gone twisting up the Little Big Horn to rescue Reno and his command, after the awful Custer massacre. Or he might have told of the old times on the river, and of the buffalo and Indian days.

Perhaps later on her men might speak of the grain waiting for her up the river, of great herds of stock that were fattening back on the rolling plains that she might have work to do, and of the creameries that were turning the nutritious grasses of the land into a butter that was to take the blue ribbons far off in the East. These were the days when it was a joy to be alive. How lovely life might be without that shadow of the No. 3, forecasting the future.

CHAPTER XL

A NORTHERN PIONEER

THE number 1 was unable to say whether her nervous breakdown was occasioned by alkali water, lignite coal screenings, or excessive work on the new road. All she knew was that she was sent across the river to the N. P. shops, where she was promised a rest and general going over.

As this was a divisional point of that road, she soon became well acquainted with the freight and passenger engines, and spent many hours discussing railroad affairs. Regarding her as a guest, the N. P.'s allowed her to do most of the talking. But when she began to repeat herself, as some guests have a way of doing, the engines on that road became tired of being listeners, for they had important things on their own steam chests to talk about.

One late evening, when the small stranger was monologing, and had started to relate the history of the part engines played in the Civil War, an old time N. P. spoke up, "Yes, No. 1, that was quite interesting the first, or was it the fifth time, you told it. But now it's such an old story I cannot hold my steam any longer, and don't mind stating that we have a history, too."

"But not a very old one, Miss N. P."

"Oh, I don't know about that. Guess you've forgotten, if you ever knew it, that our history began before your Civil War, yes, even earlier than that."

A fast passenger engine on the next track called out, "Oh, I'll say it did. Tell her about it, eight wheeler."

Now the 1 realized that she had been talking too much, so responded, "Yes, please do, eight wheeler, you're so old I know you must have some most interesting things to talk about."



A WAR-TIME ENGINE



THE END OF THE WAR

"I don't know that I'm so very much older than you, No. 1, but I've been on the Northern Pacific long enough to see the country from the Great Lakes to the Coast become what the promoters of the road prophesied years ago when they built it. And it has come about just as they told Lincoln it would, if he'd help them get the road through."

"What Lincoln was that? Some surveyor, or some man you had out here on the N. P.?"

The other engine retorted, "Huh, guess you don't know that Abraham Lincoln did all he could to get us built. I'll say he did."

"But you weren't started until long after he died."

"Maybe so, but as you are not familiar with your country's history, I'll take this opportunity to post you a bit on the past.

"Way back before the beginning of the Civil War, the people out on the north coast were so cut off from the rest of the country that they felt they were not being treated fairly. When they learned the Government was preparing to put through the Union Pacific, they, with others living between them and the Mississippi, went on to Washington, and put their troubles squarely up to those in power. They told of the wonderful agricultural, mineral and timber resources of the country the proposed road would traverse. They had the backing of their governors, for at that time nearly all the present north-western states were just territories. Nothing was done, and becoming discouraged, they got hold of Lincoln and told him of their needs. He was a western man, who had come from a wilderness himself, so he appreciated the necessity for a northern transcontinental. It may be that he remembered what President Jefferson once said to his secretary——"

"What did he say, Miss N. P.? And by the way, who was his secretary?"

"He was a Captain Lewis, a man of Virginian ancestry. President Jefferson, when he had negotiated the Louisiana Purchase from France, was sending him up the Missouri River to its very source, and then over the mountains to the head-

waters of the Columbia, and down that mighty stream to the Coast."

"It must have been some trip if he went. Tell me why Jefferson desired him to go."

"I'd say it was some trip, No. 1. Jefferson probably saw far into the future and wanted to know the best way for the Northern Pacific to get to the Coast. Or possibly he had some curiosity as to how much of a bargain he had made in buying this western country, and wanted to be prepared in case anyone asked or told him he had been swindled. At any rate, Lewis picked out as his side pardner a fellow by the name of Clark. They got busy, rounded up a lot of bold men and guides, and prepared to furnish the President all the information he desired.

"They started on the lower Missouri in boats, and the first winter caught them up near Bismarck, where they holed in for the winter and talked with the Indians. Here, as the saying is, they cooled their heels until the ice went out, and then went on up the river, watching the Indians, the stumps in the water, and all the while making notes of the wonderful country as they passed through. But No. 1, the details of their trip make too long a story, so I'll just say they kept on going until they reached the head-waters of the Missouri. Then they tramped over the mountains, and if it had not been for an Indian woman, they might never have come back, but that's still another story."

"Maybe it is, N. P., but other stories are at times the more interesting ones. Who was this squaw you mentioned?"

"I didn't say she was a squaw. But for your information I'll remark that she was an Indian woman they had picked up on the way. The Sioux had captured her from the Shoshones. To get back to her own tribe she went along with Lewis and Clark, and when they lost their way, she guided them on over the old trails she remembered, to the head-waters of the Columbia, that they might float down to the Coast."

"Guess Jefferson must have been relieved when his man, Lewis, got back and told him that he'd got a bargain, wasn't he, N. P.?" asked the No. 1.



THE FIRST NORTHERN PACIFIC TRAIN ACROSS THE MISSOURI RIVER ON THE
ICE, 1879

From a painting by H. G. Stitt



THE NORTHERN PACIFIC CROSSES THE MISSOURI ON FERRYBOATS

From the *Minneapolis Journal*



THE END OF THE ROAD



THE GENERAL HAD TALKED WITH THE EARLY SETTLERS

"Pleased enough so that his new government kept what he had bought."

When the relating engine had come to a stop, the 1 said, "And then what, N. P.?"

"Nothing much until long afterwards, when they sent surveying parties out to locate the best way for our road. From some of the old maps, it seems at one time they planned to build the road north of the Missouri, near the Canadian boundary, but they changed their plans and struck right off across Dakota, and on through the passes of the Rockies and Cascades. It's too bad, No. 1, that you don't belong to us, for then you might go over the road and see some scenery."

"But I have, N. P., I've seen some wonderful scenery back in the Alleghanies. And I'm saying those mountains are simply wonderful."

"Wonderful, nothing, No. 1. I saw them when I came West, and I'll say to you they are hardly more than foothills compared to the Rockies; and as to the Cascades, with their snow and timber, you'll never know what scenery is until you see them." Evidently annoyed that anyone should compare the eastern mountains with her own, the N. P. engine went on: "And if that's not enough, you should see Yellowstone."

"It's quite interesting, I'm told," replied the visitor.

"Most interesting thing in the country. Take that Old Faithful Geyser, spouting every hour. And—but what's the use. You'll never see it, and no one can properly describe the wonders of the Park. 'Course when I first came out here everything was entirely different. There were Indians and buffaloes everywhere."

"Yes, so an old rail told me," answered the 1.

"What do rails know about it?" was the indignant answer. "They are put down, like some folks I know, and there they stay until they get too light, when they are scrapped. What did a fool rail ever know about Indians, and men like Custer, Sheridan, Miles and all those I've hauled over the road in my day? You must have been wanting something to do, No. 1, to listen to the sorrows of a poor old rail. Yes, I'm surprised

that you ever demeaned yourself to listen to such a vulgar thing as a rail."

"Well, he was an N. P. rail," tartly responded the 1.

"That helps some, and to be fair, I'll have to admit that some of our old fifty-six pounders certainly did do well by us. If they hadn't shown the right stuff, I'd have been ditched more than once."

"Yes, and the fish plates too. They must have done their part."

"They did, and yet it's a funny thing that I've never met, or rather, run over a rail, that I did not hear it complaining to its fish that if it would keep its nuts tight on the bolts they would all have an easier time of it. Yes, I've know more than one man who would be better off if he had a section hand or someone else tighten up his bolts. For some certainly do get wobbly unless a man with a wrench comes along and screws them up." She ended with scorn, "But to think of a rail with a battered end, having the nerve to talk of our history, and of the Indians. If I wanted to, I could tell you a thing or two. I just guess I could—how the Indians got Custer. Don't suppose that rail friend of yours ever told you about that, No. 1?"

"No, he never said a word about Custer. Yet of course I heard of it over in Bismarck, but not much, so please tell me."

"I suppose I might as well. You know, No. 1, that years ago when the Government wanted to keep the Indians away from the western trails that led from the Missouri to California, they persuaded the devils to go north, where they would not be molested. Yet when gold was discovered in Montana, the seekers of it immediately tracked their way into what the Indians felt was their own country. The Indians naturally objected to having their game killed, and to being again forced back, and as they knew of only one thing to do—kill every man, woman and child they could get their hands on—they proceeded to do this with great enthusiasm. The Government could not countenance such behavior, so soldiers were sent out to pacify the red men. As their one idea of pacification was

death, the Indians hardly relished their coming, so there was an open warfare for years. You should hear of what our first surveyors went through."

"I have," answered the No. 1. "My rail friend told me about it, but not about Custer. Was he so very brave, Miss N. P.?"

"Maybe he was. Yes, guess he must have been, yet some blame him for the massacre of his men. There's an old steamboat Captain on the Missouri who used to talk hours about Custer. Guess he knew his waters, as he used to say."

"What did he say?" asked the 17.

"Well, it seems that this man, Marsh, I was speaking of, took his steamboat, the *Far West*, up the Big Horn River, and brought down those the Indians hadn't killed. He heard General Gibbons say when he sent Custer off with his Seventh Cavalry, 'Don't be greedy, Custer.' "

"What did he mean by that?"

"Well, No. 1, all the generals had the impression they could whip any numbers of Indians, and that the more they killed and drove off, the greater the credit they would receive. This naturally caused some rivalry among them. On this occasion there were enough soldiers in the command to overcome any body of Indians they were likely to find. They discovered them all right, and whether or not due to a misunderstanding of orders, the command separated and Custer, with his Seventh Cavalry, rushed ahead to the Indians who were awaiting them. When he attacked they were prepared, and rushed him from all sides, and hordes of them on their ponies circled the detached command, picking off the helpless soldiers. When the circle closed in, they soon finished any soldiers who were left, and of the whole command, only one man got away. He was a Crow Indian guide, and managed to escape by putting on a blanket and working his way through the milling, excited demons.

"It took him some time to make his way to Marsh's *Far West*, on the Big Horn. There, unable to speak a word of

English, he squatted on the deck of the steamboat and drew in some sand, lines and many dots, pointing as he said "abrasaka," the Indian word for soldiers. It was not long before those watching with drawn faces realized, as he scattered his dots and contracted his lines, that he was telling them in his own primitive way that Custer and his whole command had been annihilated.

"They soon learned that the Crow had told the truth, and that after the Indians had finished their scalping and mutilating, they had turned, intending to handle the rest of the command in the same manner. They were accomplishing their intention when smoke signs off across the prairies told them that other soldiers were coming to the rescue; so like many wild things of the prairie, they faded away and lost themselves in the miles of rolling hills.

Marsh gathered in the wounded and dying on his *Far West* and after some days and nights on the ever-changing, muddy Missouri, reached our town of Bismarck late at night, to put the word on the wire of what had happened to the bold golden-haired Custer and his men."

A night or so later the No. 1 said to the eight wheeler, "I cannot forget what you told me the other day. You spoke then as if you had been through it yourself."

"And just why shouldn't I, for I handled many of the soldiers, some dead and some alive.

"Yes, I helped the Northern Pacific blast the northern railroad trail to the Coast, and if it were not Indians making trouble, it was something else. In fact, the first years I was out here it seemed as if we might never get through. The mountains were harder to cross, the tunnels harder to bore, and worst of all, the road was costing more than its builders estimated. The money gave out, and Villard, who carried most of the burden, was borne down and crushed by the load. Then others took hold and pushed the work along. Each day brought us nearer to those who were blasting their way from the West. It



THE BORE A SHIELD THAT SAID N. P. R. R., ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA TO PORTLAND, OREGON



WE HAD FAITH IN OUR ENGINEERS THAT BUILT THESE THINGS OF TIMBER

was disheartening, No. 1, to run mile after mile, seeing not a house or settlement, and with stations so far apart as to make an engine wonder if there were any stations, or even a future if we did get through.

"I will never forget the way we dug along the mountain sides and slipped along the river edges, to go pounding over a great timber trestle that reached up from a river bottom, or one that had been thrown across some yawning crevice in the hills. At first the sensation was indescribable, as your engineer sent you across the creaking groaning things. You could feel the great top timbers crush down on those 'way below, and feel the track sink under your drivers. But as we had faith in our engineers who had built these things of timbers and bolts, we went on, ever nearing the Pacific.

"When the time finally came, and there were only a thousand feet left between the eastern and western construction gangs, trains rolled in from beyond your Alleghanies, bearing not only the most prominent men in our own country, but those who had come from abroad to see the final spike driven in the first northern transcontinental. I'll tell you, No. 1, it was a proud day when, tired and worn out—though I will say my men did their utmost to clean me up, and make me look well—I stood on the last siding, as the first of the four through trains came winding up the valleys and over the mountains where we workers had built the way. You should have seen the eight-wheel beauty that had the first train. She shone as if she were just out of the shops.

"Evergreens were wound and twisted about her stack, and on her front end she bore a shield with letters that said, N. P. R. R., St. Paul, Minnesota to Portland, Oregon. The flags which decorated her waved in the clear air against a background of fir and green clad mountains. They seemed to know that they were a part of the country and of the road that had pushed its way day and night from the clear waters of Lake Superior to the mountain-bounded salt waters of Puget Sound."

"Oh, how wonderful it all must have been," replied a sub-

dued voice from the No. 1, "and how proud you must be to have been one of the first engines on your road. Tell me, eight wheeler, why you are not one of those pioneers they talk about."

"Perhaps I was a pioneer engine on the Northern Pacific, the pioneer transcontinental road of the North."

Nothing was said for a long time, until the No. 1 remarked, "Oh, what changes you must have seen on your road, Miss N. P."

"I'll say I have. Where at first we had only an occasional train, one of our freights today handles as much as three of our little trains in the past, and now they come through all hours of the day and night. Whereas we used to stall in the snow, and our engineers lived in their cabs under the banks to keep the fires burning so we would not freeze up, now great rotary plows chisel and cut their way through the cuts and drifts so that the North Coast Limited may roll into either the Portland or St. Paul stations on time.

"Yes, 1, I am glad that I am an N. P., and that I took a part in the building of this western country. Now that I am old and my plates are thin, I'm glad that I have so many pleasant memories of the past. When I first came West we had a few miles of track, while now we have thousands and where the trestles used to groan under us great steel bridges carry our heaviest power and trains across the valleys and rivers. Great heavy rails and heavy ballasted roadway have driven off your small fifty-six pound friends and it's a joy to me in my old age to appreciate what I helped to do. Yes, and things might have been still more different, for if certain arrangements had been carried out, Villard, when he came back to us, would have controlled if not owned, our great Northern rival. Yet on the whole two roads working to develop a great empire probably did more than if there had been only one."

After a long pause, she concluded, "It's been very nice to have met you, No. 1, and I have enjoyed this visit with you. I trust that the rumor I've heard may be true: that we are to take

you over. If we do, let's trust that we may see more of one another than we have in the past."

"I've not heard that, N. P., but if we are to be sold, I'd love to be a part of your system."

However, as the No. 1 steamed back to her own road, she doubted whether what she had heard about her road's sale might be so. Yet all the N. P.'s had been so kind to her, it had seemed the polite thing to agree.

CHAPTER XLI

PORTENDS

AS THE days began to shorten, an army of men with plows and wheel scrapers showed themselves off over the rolling hills to the south, forecasting to the two Baldwins that their old road was coming. It was natural that they worried, and asked themselves if it were reaching out for the business of their road, or if it were after the road itself? Sorrowfully, they questioned each other what that might mean, and what would become of them then. Would they be returned to the graveyard of engines behind the round-house to await their end?

The blackbirds who had paired off in the early summer, had returned with their new families, and now flashed their iridescence from the tall brown headed rushes in the swamps as they gathered in swirling flocks preparatory to migration south. Other birds had, as it were, slipped off in the night. The ducks had taken to the open water, to be away from the ice that was reaching out from the shore in a lacy pattern.

At times when the 1 toiled up the line with her ever-increasing train of empties, she could hear, off in the still night, the honk-honk of the geese that the cold had driven from their Canadian nesting places. Further up in the sky, where the diamond-like stars might be seen, were great flocks of white swans coming down from the Arctic regions. As the little old engine poked her way through the night, more than once she asked herself if she was ever to see another prairie spring. Her spirit seemed to have left with the white geese and swans that winged their way south as winter came on.

The mine called for more empty cars, and as the orders poured in, the small road became alive with the movement of coal. The Chief Engineer, who had been roaming the prairies

during the summer, was now on the job underground. The thin-faced man could again be seen swinging his legs from the tippie or roaming about the wet underground passages, as he joked with the men, and urged them to get out more coal, and ever more coal.

The 1 thought he did not joke as much when he came into her cab to thaw his freezing clothes, and she was hardly surprised at the terminal one night, when she heard the company doctor say to him, "This thing has gone far enough—now you have got to stop," and the hoarse answer, "I cannot stop, even if I want to. We've got too much coal to get out."

"It's not a question of coal any longer: it's a question of you now, and I'm taking you away from this damned job of yours tonight. So get ready."

"Absurd," was the answer. "If I go, I go alone."

Was there perhaps a low feeling, or even sorrow in the hearts of some of his fellow-workers and the two little Baldwins, as they saw their Manager board the midnight Northern Pacific train for the East? The 1, in a low voice, asked the 2 if he would be like their other old masters, who had gone east, never to return.

Soon a new Superintendent appeared on the line, and as a regular railroad man, did not seem to over-value this once boasted of family feeling. He did not consider it necessary to question why a train should be late, and did not care to discuss the subject further.

When the winter was well under way and the cuts filled with grit and snow, he, coming from a big road properly equipped with snow fighting equipment, could see no particular reason why he should listen to the old trainmen when they advised him to keep the trains off the road, for they felt that there was a blizzard coming. In return he intimated to them that it would be a cold day when he'd hold trains when there was so much freight to be moved. He suggested that they cease being scared of a little snow, and ordered them to go north and obey the orders he had given them.

The No. 1, standing before the small station, hardly relished the job on hand, but being a good sport, she went plunging through the deep snow in the long cut near at hand. With all the steam her old boiler could stand she faced the raging wind on the open prairie, and where the track had been blown clear, she gathered speed to go smashing into the next drift, getting into the hills where there were more drifts to slow her down. It was not long before she was in a way staggering along like a man with a heavy load, not knowing how much farther he could go.

Finally the storm won out, and the old engine was stalled where the blizzard that was now raging, soon piled up enough snow to prevent her from moving either forward or backward. Tom, the former brakeman, and now a full-fledged conductor, pulled on his heavy fur gloves, dragged the heavy flaps of his cap over his ears, damned North Dakota, the road, the blizzard, and the man who had sent him off on this fool's errand. Having expressed his most pressing opinions, he jumped from the cab where he had been warming up, into a soft, heavy drift. He wallowed out and set his face to the blinding storm, starting down the partly covered track, for he, like all, knew that it was dangerous business to go wandering off when these blizzards were on a rampage.

In one place where the snow had covered everything for hundreds of feet, he missed the track and went plunging off into the barrier of snow that filled the air. There were no longer any telegraph poles, or if there were they were hidden in the white wall that now shut him in. There seemed to be little use of attempting to go on, and he did not know how to go back, for the tracks that he had made were soon covered as though the blizzard had chosen the railroader for her own. His feet, which had been getting colder and colder, now began to cease their complaining. The eyes that had boldly faced the winter's horror were now tired and half closed, as the sand and snow bit at the lids. What was the use of attempting to go on? Why not sit down for a spell in that nice small dent in the prairie, until he felt a bit rested?

He found the soft snow really quite comfortable when he got used to it. What a relief it was to half lie and half sit, with your back against the wind, and give your eyes a rest. Once he wondered hazily how his train was getting on. But why worry about it? Let the man down the road do that. As the snow drifted about and began to cover his legs, he began to snuggle under the warm blanket, and wondered why he had not drawn it about him when he had first sat down. He was so comfortable he thought it would be nice to nap off for a bit, and then when rested, he could go out in his small back yard and screw the hinge on that back gate that his missus had been fussing about for so long. And while he was there he might plant some of those seeds he had in the kitchen table drawer. As the white sheet worked up about his neck, he began to feel that it might be about time to get up. Yes, he guessed it must be, for he heard his missus down in the kitchen. Gracious, how good the cup of coffee would be that she was now boiling on the back of the stove. If he weren't so comfortable he'd get right up. Suppose he ought to, for it would be a hell of a thing for him to be late getting to his train. Now that it had become a matter of business he couldn't stay much longer. Why couldn't his wife let him sleep? Didn't she know that he was all tired out?

Well, he might have known it, for from downstairs he heard a very low and indistinct, "You, Tom, get right up! Don't you know what time it is? And go in and see your son too, before you come down. See that he hasn't kicked the covers off." Knowing that he still had another few minutes to nap after this first call, he'd wait for a minute or so longer. While he was wondering why the sheet would persist in getting so damp and cold, the call came again, "Where are you Tom, and why don't you come to me? Don't you know that we need you?"

Of course they needed him: he'd get right up. As he turned, a blast of wind, snow and sand so stung him in the face as to arouse a mind that was rapidly becoming dormant. Suddenly realizing the condition he was in, he hurled himself from the drift, and with a sudden insight as to direction, went half

running and half stumbling against the wind, swinging his arms full length from behind his back against his chest. As the blood began to circulate in his almost numb limbs, he stumbled against a steel rail and followed it south. He did not know whether it was half an hour or hours before he half fell against a station's door, and went stumbling into the heated waiting room. He gasped to the horror-stricken agent that his train was stalled in the snow three or four miles north, and gasped as he lapsed into unconsciousness, "I don't know if I'm frozen to death or not. Wire them to send help to my train."

When the man running the road read the flimsy message from the agent, he muttered, "Fools! Now send out the No. 2 and tell them that they are expected to get through." So another small Baldwin faced the storm and floundered along until she was within a mile or so of the 1, and then with one last heave, settled down in her own drift to wait for the storm to cease. On receipt of another flimsy message, the No. 3 was ordered out to clear the road and bring back those two worthless engines and their train. It was hours later that the telegraph lines ticked the short message: "The Nos. 1, 2 and 3 all stalled in the snow. Cannot move a wheel. What are your orders?"

There appeared only one thing to do: wire the N. P. for help. To those demanding coal he telegraphed that the blizzard had suspended operation, and to the old General that a blizzard was raging. The other road answered, "Plowing out our own road. Cannot send rotary plow for several days. We must have coal." Those without fuel wired: "We must have coal. When will you ship?" The old gentleman asked: "How much coal was mined yesterday, how many cars moved, and have you opened the road yet? Advise immediately for my life is being made a burden by every man, woman and child in North Dakota, all saying they are frozen or freezing to death. Am wiring the mine to increase its output."

It is hardly necessary to state the comments the General made when he learned that his three engines were lost in the

drifts, and that there would be no more trains until the N. P. rotary whirled and chopped its way to the three chilled and fireless engines, that waited up in their snow banks for help.

The men from the three engines finally reached a small hotel, and after getting coffee and something to eat, pulled off their half wet and frozen clothes, and crawled into the icy cold, clammy beds, damning everything in sight.

Thus did this winter of firm railroad operation go on. When spring came, all were tired out, and did their work only for the money that was in it. The 1 and 2 shuddered when they saw their old friend the 14, once a sparkling passenger engine, come pushing the construction train across the nearby flats. Now she, like themselves, was dirty, in bad order, and dispirited.

Their General seemed much older when he got down from the 99 and walked slowly about the property. As the No. 1 said, "He has a look on his face as if he were tiring of our road." Neither was overly surprised when the President of their old road appeared and made a complete investigation of the line and everything they had. Then it was not long before a wire arrived saying that his company had bought the road. Three of the old moguls that they had once known came up from the south, and told the Baldwins that they were to have their jobs, and that they had better get ready to go back.

CHAPTER XLII

"LEAD KINDLY LIGHT"

AS the swans had slipped off in the night, so two old engines that had done their work and lived their lives, bumped along over the dark prairie as they travelled their last journey. It would not have been so hard if they had been allowed to handle a train of their own, even if it had been exceedingly small. Nor would it have been quite so heart-breaking if they had been coupled together so that they might have comforted one another on this last trip. Now they were just two broken-spirited Baldwins, going back for the last time, with no one to comfort or cheer them to the end.

The trip seemed endless as the local freights pounded on East. Neither cared to look into the future when they were set in the west side terminal of the great city, for both knew that the day was near at hand when they would be back on the track that led to but one end.

Fortune, or a kind yard master, had been good to them, for on this last night they were placed together, where they might feel each other's presence, even if neither spoke a word. However, they did hear one old railroader say to the other: "Have you heard about our General?"

"No: what about him?"

"I saw a wire in the office, that the old gentleman may not live very long; in fact, may not reach home alive. It seems that he has been abroad, and that our people have received a wire that he was taken from a steamer 'way off in Quebec; that the 99 was sent there to receive him, and that his old friends up in Montreal have sent word that his spirit still survives, and that they will do all possible to make his last trip over their line

as comfortable as consideration and respect can make it. They are to give him back to us this afternoon."

Oh, how the little old 17 and 19 did wish that they might be waiting at the great international bridge to handle his train for the last time! Why should they not have been given this last task? How carefully they would have nursed his train around all those old curves and bad spots that they had once known so well. But perhaps another old Baldwin might be there, for they knew how much better he would feel to have one of his own little engines guide him through the dark night.

All that night they thought of him back on his old road, of the sad-faced, gray-haired old men that sat bowed in their cabs as they guided their trains with a care they had never before used, that he might rest in peace: of the silver haired conductors back in the sleeping cars, with tired heads resting against the window frames as they remembered those days when they were all young and part of the great loving railroad family, that had been ruled, loved and guided by the man they were now taking home for the last time.

Early in the morning as the old engines were being switched in the shop yards, they were set out in front of the station, where they saw many of the old men who had come from the shops, that they, who themselves were reaching their own ends, might pay a last tribute to the one who had been so much in their lives. With bowed heads and tired eyes they looked off east, off over the hills where there was a whiff of dark smoke. Men spoke in lowered, sad tones, "There he comes." With their worn caps in hand, they stood on the platform, as they saw one of their first little engines, with the car 99, slip down the hill carrying their General, who had whispered to one of his men: "I shall live until I have passed over my old road." And with determination, "I have come back, and I shall die in my own home."

As the train moved on, these men who had shared the sorrows and joys of the railroad with him, watched with tired eyes the whiff of smoke in the West that told them their Old Man had left them for all time.

For the next few days there was a strange silence about the usually noisy bustling shops, as if the men at their benches, and those working on the engines, feared that they might disturb the man who had only a few more days of life.

They asked each morning if their General was still alive, until one warm clear July afternoon, a barred and starred flag rose slowly on the pole at his home, to remain at half mast, and tell the city and its people that the spirit of their General had departed. Soon other flags floated from the city that had known of him and his work. Quiet, sad-faced men met, and with hardly a word, passed on to do their work.

The old engines, forgotten and alone, stood out on their sandy sidings and waited and waited. Perhaps they heard, 'way off across the great river, the chimes in an old gray church ring out from bronze throats, "Lead Kindly Light."

Some of us believe that the spirits of the two small Baldwins left their tired old bodies when that of their leader passed into the great beyond. Perhaps that of the 17 was there when the sun, casting its last rays through the leaves of a great overhanging elm, shed a glowing light on the white hairs of those gathered at the grave of a man, one of their own sort, and of whom a great railroad executive in a far-away New York office said, "We will seldom see the likes of him again."

The sun went down, while many told of the part one man had played, and of what his life had meant to others. And who can say that those of the Baldwins that were left, cared to go on alone?

Now perhaps at night, when the shops are dark, the spirit of the old 17 may be telling of the old, old days, and the joys and sorrows of an engine that had done its part in the building of the Northwest.



THE "FAR WEST," A HEROINE OF THE UPPER MISSOURI



THE SMALL STEAMER "WASHBURN" THAT CAPTAIN MARSH LOVED

